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The Methods Course Modernized

LINGUISTICALLY speaking are we an isolationist nation? Have the social sciences crowded out language study? Why are schools of education generally unsympathetic to us? These are some of the doubts in our minds. Provocative though they be, they do not go to the heart of our problem. There is one other question that actually does: How can modern foreign languages be so taught that they justify their position in our educational curriculum today? This is the query that our methods course has always attempted to answer. The time has come to ask it again and to seek a possible solution to it by surveying briefly, but anew, our entire endeavor.

The American Scene—We traditionally assert that we study modern foreign languages in order to be able to “understand the other fellow.” But true comprehension, like charity, begins at home. As teachers of an alien tongue, we must know our own civilization, our own “way of life,” as developed for us by such writers as Beard, Parrington, and Commager. A transitional step is made when we see our own culture as others see it also. This means a critical study of works comparable to those of Tocqueville, Siegfried and more recent observers.

Education—Equally important as a knowledge of our country is a thorough acquaintance with the educational policies and problems of our day. We can no longer teach our subject without seeing the possible or real relationship between it and general education, education for life adjustments, government aid to education, etc. An interest in the programmatic scheme of learning is not enough. We must delve into the practical.

The very blueprint of a school or college is important to us. For how can we avail ourselves of audio-visual aids if there is no plan for a language laboratory? We cannot subsist if the new philosophy overlooks us; neither can we endure if the new building excludes any part of our aims or ambitions.

History—To a knowledge of our own culture and an awareness of the educational development of our day must be added an acquaintance with the history of our particular field. This record has been written in E. W. Bagster-Collins’ “The History of Modern Language Teaching in the United States.”¹ These facts, however, are already two decades old. The story must be modernized and expanded. Significant would be the writing of the history of each important department, school, and center in the country. Although the task would be a thankless one of compiling information on courses offered, students enrolled, teaching staff, materials used, results obtained, etc. it would surely provide safe and solid ground on which every teacher of the present could stand securely and face the future with a heightened sense of accomplishment and pride.

Language.—The history of our profession should be followed by that of the particular language that we teach. Traditionally this has been offered in the guise of a “philology course” treated from the standpoint of phonology, morphology, and some syntax. Today, this is no longer enough. The new course in the history of language should be more general, more related to other fields. Ideally it starts with speculation about language itself, with the rise of language out of utterance, and the formation of language families. It deals with the “internal” history of each individual language, treating such topics as word formation and borrowing, orthography, and semantics. It does not neglect to study the works of lexicographers, grammarians and literati who moulded speech. It takes into account every possible expression whether savant or slang. On the “external” side it surveys the expansion of the languages beyond its national frontiers to colonies, empires and “unions.” There it keeps a sharp eye open for competition with other tongues. No

¹ In *Studies in Modern Language Teaching*, Vol. XVII, New York: Macmillan, 1930.

stone is left unturned, for we realize more and more than in order to teach "une langue" one must be fairly well acquainted with "le langage" and "la linguistique."

Psychology—American civilization and the history of a foreign language are likely to be "home plate" for the teacher of French, Spanish, Italian or German, while the psychology of learning is bound to be more "outfield." For most of us are not laboratory technicians, and we find it difficult to assimilate the conclusions based upon scientifically controlled, psychological experimentation. Be this as it may, the two books² on the complicated subjects of motivation, transfer aptitude and the like have made one very important point clear to us in general. It is that many of the assumptions that we have been making concerning our teaching materials, methods, and results obtained through transfer or otherwise are wholly unfounded. A sharp yet common-sense astringent has been applied to many of our assertions in these words of our two investigators: "There is evidence per contra so far as the experiments observed are concerned." Let us heed the caution. And, too, let us ask the psychologists to work with us. There is much concerning the actual "technique of teaching" that we may keep hush-hush among ourselves and that would be of value to our scientific experts. Would it not benefit them to know if there is a correlation between the mistakes made in writing and the ones made in reading; how it is possible to rephrase a grammar rule so that it is easily applicable; just at what point fatigue occurs in the drill of a given skill; if more mistakes are made at a blackboard than on a piece of paper; how best a dictation can be given; whether literary masterpieces make good conversation pieces; whether repetition is always a wise policy or not; whether memory and mimicry go hand in hand as assumed, and at what point one is decidedly the underminer of the other.

The psychology of learning and the technique of teaching, fields until now held so far apart, complement each other. The experiment of one is there to fructify the experience of the other. Only cooperation is called for, a quality so often lacking in our field.

Values—We now come a little nearer familiar

ground, for every teacher has at one time or another made up his or her mind about the value of the job he or she was doing. Yet in proclaiming and advertising such we have fallen short.

As teachers of a subject that has vocational opportunities, we have investigated the matter of jobs. Among others, we know the studies of Lois Gaudin and of Theodore Huebener.³ Through these we are well aware that outside of actual teaching there are certain openings specifically in business, industry, civil service, and various vocations. We have learned, too, that these positions call vaguely for a "knowledge of a foreign language" that is not defined, that bilingualism is a decided asset, that in large cities definite preference for one language (Spanish) over another is a common occurrence, that salary is adjusted to competence, that a second or technical skill is required in addition to a second language, that preferential distinctions are often made between male and female help, that jobs in the home office are more abundant than those abroad. This information we know full well, in every aspect of its style cramping reality. And yet do we make it available to our students good, pragmatic-minded Americans that they may be, before the inappropriate or sadly retarded moment has finally arrived?

In the proclamation of our cultural values, we are equally deficient. We speak gratuitously (and some of us vociferously) about the "harmony of human relations" being entirely based upon "speaking the other fellow's language," and we are perfectly right. But do we ever stop to define what we so glibly maintain? Do we ever realize that language learning is but an "initial step" in the agreeable adjustment of interpopulation problems?⁴

Until our values, concrete or cultural, are

² Frederick B. Agard and Harold B. Dunkel: *An Investigation of Second-Language Teaching* Boston: Ginn, 1948; H. B. Dunkel: *Second Language Learning*, Boston: Ginn 1948.

³ Lois S. Gaudin, "Foreign Languages and Job Opportunities," in *Modern Language Journal*, Dec. 1951. Theodore Huebener: *Opportunities in Foreign Languages*, Vocational Guidance Manuals, Bronx 60, N. Y. 1955.

⁴ Gilbert C. Kettlekamp: "Realism in the Teaching of Foreign Languages." *Modern Language Journal*, Dec. 1950.

not only sensed for what they may be, but are defined for what they are, we cannot reasonably expect that they will become a "constructive function that operates actively and continuously" in the lives of the masses of students pursuing them.

Objectives.—A consideration of values should lead us promptly to the subject of "objectives" and thence to a discussion of "methods." But are we not more or less agreed upon the traditional four-fold objectives, especially in the beginning of language study and to much extent at all stages later on? We can agree perhaps if we admit a little more frankly exactly what we infer. The term four-fold is slightly specious, if not a little misleading. By it most of us mean training in the skills of reading, writing, speaking and understanding with a decided favoring of the first. Given crowded conditions in the classroom, the texts from which we have to teach, the availability of materials to be used, could we honestly signify anything else?

As to the methods to be followed in constructing our objectives, at once pyramided and four-fold, there can possibly be no concert of opinion among us. The very word method elicits from among us the cry that "there is no such thing." And there can't be as long as ever our books on the subject are hopeless confusion of "direct" and "natural," "phonetic" and "reform," "psychological" and "new." Until we have some straightforward and systematic treatment of the contributions of Gouin, Swan, Plötz, Schweitzer, and others we would do well to leave this entire subject in the limbo of lizardic dormancy that it so well deserves.

Reading.—No "method" yet devised has codified for us the proper ways to read. Given appropriate materials, an alert student and an imaginative teacher will find these out for themselves. The problems confronting language teachers at this point are of slightly different kind. They have to do firstly with a defense of reading in the original, and secondly with a discovery of what readable material actually is.

Among ourselves we surely do not need to be concerned that English translations of foreign masterpieces are at most but "imperfect reproductions of the original thing."⁵ Yet there are those, and they are many and mighty, who contend that adaptations and translations are an

effective way of reducing the "impediments to communication."⁶ It is up to us to persuade, to prove that the evidence is completely per contra. We must do it in the quiet of our classroom and if need be, in the clamor of the public platform. As far as we are concerned, that war is forever on.

If translations are not, then what is, in the original, a readable text? For the young student not far advanced, it may not be at all the work we revere as a classic, nor the jaded war horse that we have trotted out lo these many years. Youth seeks in reading adventures, qualities of excitement, marvel, mystery, and strife.

And if such texts, when we find them, bristle with vocabulary hazards, and syntax traps, then the material ceases to be readable. It is up to us to avoid the dull and difficult, and for a short while at least to seek "le facile et l'agréable."

For our older and highly trained students, the problem is quite different again. Here it is one not so much of the materials themselves as of formulation and presentation. In the past we have adhered ritualistically to traditional molds of courses: survey and century, author and genre. Our concern has been almost exclusively with historical determinism, ethical duty, and aesthetic precept.

The student of today asks us to modernize, to generalize, to liberalize, to make his experience in reading with us have some significant relationship and bearing with that of other fields. The request is not difficult to meet. It requires a little reshaping along definite though not entirely new lines. Courses will result that are something resembling these: "The New Freedom in France" (Malraux, Saint-Exupéry, Sartre, Camus); "The Concept of the Concentration Universe" (Kafka, Sartre, Sperber and Rousset); "The Spirit of Modernism in Verse" (Rimbaud, Apollinaire, Breton, Aragon, Michaux); "Renaissance of the Religious Spirit" (Mauriac, Graham Greene, Bernanos, Simone Weil and Gilbert Cesbron).

To justify reading in the original and to be

⁵ Henry Grattan Doyle, "Will Translations Suffice?" *Language Leaflets*, No. 10.

⁶ Gilbert Highet in an article on I. A. Richards' adaptation of the *Iliad* of Homer (*The Wrath of Achilles*) which the former reviewed in the N. Y. Times, Nov. 19, 1950.

more original in the treatment of what we read, these are the challenges that are thrust upon us today.

Aids.—The application of the four-fold objectives with emphasis upon reading implies a concomitant teaching of writing and of aural-oral skills at all times. So that the approach to them may be uniform, it calls for a treatment of those factors of language common to its four aspects, namely, vocabulary, syntax, and rhythmic flow. Through them is realized the "mystérieuse unicité" that Mallarmé found characteristic of all tongues. To find this, mechanical aids if properly used can be a remarkable help.

In the correct and systematic application of audio-visual aids, many considerations come to mind. First, the expense of the equipment of a language laboratory of film projection room, the purchase of discs, wire or tape recorders, of strips, slides and films is considerable. Mediocre equipment is not better than none, for it gives inadequate results. A room in which acoustics are only average, a disc that plays with imperfect distinctness, a sketch that confusingly suggests what it is supposed to represent accurately, these are the hazards of bargain machines. Excellence, as usual, requires adequate investment. It is well to provide for it before we begin.

Operation, too, demands expertness. Mechanical devices, especially those used for instructional purposes, seem to have a fiendish ingenuity for falling into disrepair at the most crucial moments. It takes a technician, or at least someone with a modicum of technical training, to start them up and keep them going. Fortunately at present there are centers of information and training to which we can go.⁷ Unless we avail ourselves of them, we had better make sure that we have someone skilled to slip in at the audio-visual switch.

In their natural functionings our numerous aids should be made to correlate closely with classroom materials and techniques. The tendency in many of our language laboratories now (especially where experimentalists are in control) is to hop, skip and jump from subject to subject, from sight to sound and vice-versa. Whatever be the order in the classroom, whether of topics treated, or senses trained, of drills

used, something of that sequence should prevail in the laboratory session supplementary and subsidiary to academic instruction.

Never in the use of audio-visual aids should the machine be allowed to take over and the person behind it to disappear. Wherever it does, satiety and ennui are quick to set in. For in language teaching the presence of a person is a requisite at every turn. A person alone can prompt and point out, dramatize and even drill. He alone can give language learning its character and its charm.

Audio-visual aids may well be the auspicious evolution that we have hoped for. We would do well to remember, though, that discriminately purchased and inexpertly used, they are bound to defeat the purpose they were made to serve and the hopes that were made to revive.

Activities.—In a way mechanical devices are an ideal activity with which to accompany the teaching of languages. They are a break from the ordinary routine of classroom academism, and yet they correlate with its learning functions.

However, what we customarily associate with the idea of language activities is something quite different. It is more inclined to be an incessant and often times hectic round of undertakings outside regular class hours. Our reviews abound in astonishing reports of them. There is the meeting of the language club, the production of a play, a conversation tea. One sponsors a foreign film, has an exchange student in to speak. National holidays are celebrated, small philanthropies sponsored, exhibits organized and opened with éclat. Proximity to a large cosmopolitan city makes possible special attractions such as visits to museums, consulates, churches, restaurants featuring unusual menus, and shops. Sometimes it would seem that schools vie with one another in the originality of their plans and the number of their language "activities."

Today as demands come upon them from all directions, students rarely can afford without sacrifice the lavish outlay of time and energy that such programs require. The result has been a rather sane adjustment to the situation on the

⁷ Among others, in summer session courses and workshops offered at Purdue University.

part of the teachers. The classroom itself is becoming more of an activity. Realism is more frequently shown, collections displayed, pictures and posters, reading material dramatized, dialogues acted out, correspondence read. Perforce what used to be an extracurricular activity has now become an intra-classroom function.

Of course the hue and cry will go up: "But is that purely academic education"? And in reply one is reminded of John Dewey's: "What is purely academic is never truly educational."

Tests. Any over-critical remarks on this subject at the present time would be professionally ungenerous. For achievement tests have undergone recent changes, and prognosis tests are in the stage of preparation. The former have been used in the past as an efficient screening process for credit granting and placement on a wider scale. The latter, it is hoped, will help to point out to us the "reasonable risks," those who are most likely to profit from language study if given the opportunity. In an educational system faced now, more than ever before, with the problem of increasing numbers, it is gratifying to realize that such tests exist. Nevertheless, the fact remains that such means of obtaining scores and statistics are neither panaceas nor stand-pat solutions. They test a variety of talents, to be sure, but mainly those based upon recognition and retention, acquired through the exercise of language memory and mimicry. It is hoped, therefore, as progress is made, that examiners may be able to delve more deeply into the actual recesses where the gift of *sprachgefühl* may truly reside, into the initial desire and drive for the study, the possibility of lasting application to it, into the full expression of self indispensable to effective verbal communication. It may well be that mass scoring will some day supply us with the ratings that we want here. Until such time arrives, however, we shall have to continue to rely, confidently, upon individual testing and upon personal but professional testimonial.

The Teacher—Our discussion so far has been mainly theoretical. We now come to a concrete issue, the human being involved. To be sure, teaching is a "call," and real teachers are "not made but born." Nevertheless, to go into our profession without what Ordway Tead calls a "dispassionate look" at it beforehand is both

unwise and unrewarding.⁸ More practical would be the procedure of considering *a priori* four aspects of the teaching adventure: general indoctrination; teacher qualities; teacher training; professional activities.

For the purpose of general self-enlightenment with respect to the nature of a teacher's calling and career, a good many books have been written; among them, Bliss Perry's *And Gladly Teach* and John Erskine's *My Life as a Teacher*. A little closer to our immediate interests are Jacques Barzun's *Teacher in America* and Albert Guérard's *Education of a Humanist*. In such testimonials one will find the inspiration that is to hold up the torch of learning to an unending procession of youth. Our famous "compensating factors" are all there too. One must not fail to investigate as thoroughly the less advertized other side, the desire delayed, the fatigue constantly fought. To one about to enter the field, a balanced picture beforehand is better than a bright one.

There are teacher's qualities the possession of which is indispensable for success in our field. For the most part they are similar to those required of anyone who instructs youth: a dedicated spirit, intellectual excellence and integrity, emotional balance and a sense of one's effect upon others. Then associated as he is in such constant, personal contact with his students, the language teacher in particular must give evidence of certain other characteristics. His patience must be unlimited, his tact most discreet, his human understanding almost intimate. As Ruskin wrote: "When love and skill work together, expect a masterpiece."

That we have not been masterpieces of teachers we have been told too often and all too well. What has not been made sufficiently clear is that so-called inferior and unenlightened language-teaching is not due to our teachers' having shirked training, but rather that the training that is officially required of them is unsuited to the positions that they are called upon to occupy.

More advantageously planned, the program for language teachers' training would be transformed in many ways. There would be less

⁸ Ordway, Tead, "The Role of the College Teachers in our Culture." *Bulletin of the American Association University Professors*, Spring, 1951.

emphasis on credits, degrees and honors to be earned, more on the actual command of skills to be acquired. There would be less painfully prolonged and intermittent attendance at summer schools in one's own country and more intensive and semi-permanent residence in homes abroad. A "major" subject would be mastered, a "minor" eliminated. The dozen or more hours spent in pedagogical courses would be reduced to a minimal few. Student teaching would become what it needs must be, a scrutinized training in the exercise of our art, and not simply a hurried, haphazard apprenticeship in classroom drill.

The training of a capable teacher is bound to reflect itself in professional activities. In this connection one thinks especially of reviews. It is hoped that some day a greater number of our written articles will become more searching and significant, and that our delivered speeches will be less eruditely dry and impractical to our use. The sense of direction here must come from the few who plot and plan our extracurricular pursuits. Their generosity and initiative alone can create a field of fuller opportunity for the many waiting and willing to participate in a progressive way.

Administration—The average teacher of languages may simply want to teach and not care to be bothered or burdened with administrative problems and affairs. Be that as it may, it is nevertheless the unshirkable responsibility of each and every one of us to be administrative-minded, to participate actively in every phase of the functioning of our profession.

We have a rightful place in the policy table whenever important decisions are being made. They include the traditional ones of appointments, tenures, promotions and salaries. More than that, they reach in to the far recesses of every condition affecting our teaching. We must help decide who is to study languages, what languages are to be taught, at what age they are to be begun, and what aspects of them are to be emphasized. These questions are not the exclusive concern of guidance officers.

But to deserve participation in the solution of these problems, we must be continually informing ourselves of the best and latest publications on them. That means a long and often times tedious perusing of syllabi, curricula,

and catalogues. However, if we all undertake such a study on our own personal initiative, it may well be that some day as a group we would arrive at harmony and convergence of general opinion with respect to these significant matters.

The administrative-minded teacher will not only plunge himself into the problems of the present, he will also look ahead and formulate as concrete and accurate a picture as is possible of the future. He will study the vital statistics concerning education and the language chart (enrollment requirements etc.), frequently issued by our governmental agencies and by some of our leading publishing houses. He will keep up on the latest scientific experimentation and attempt to visualize its possible effect on our profession. He will track down every news item or secretary's notes about the report of a language institute and the recommendations that resulted from it. He will keep a sharp eye out for the *compte rendu* of each new course, the results of which have reached the analysable stage. One feature which he will never neglect is the views of outsiders with respect to our field. Such may well be the sounding board of the spirit that shapes things to come.

Administrative-minded teachers are enlightened about whom it could never be said: "They cannot do, therefore they teach."

Conclusion—We have been studying essentially the question of the "how of language teaching." Behind it is a still more important and fundamental one: "Why languages?" We have always said a little too vaguely that a knowledge of languages brings human understanding, a human sense of others as human beings, as Archibald MacLeish expresses it. We mean by that that we want to see where others resemble us. We seek also to comprehend their differences with compassion. We have always believed that this is essentially true where foreigners abroad are concerned. We now realize that it is also vital to achieve such mutual respect and regard within the very precincts of our own communities. Teaching languages in such a way as to make our students aware and appreciative of the uniqueness of others is our creative and Copernican step. Why should we not take it now?

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Pidgin French Grammar: A Sketch

AT THE colorful seaport of Haiphong, French Indo-China, Pidgin French is the lingua franca between the French colonials and the native population, which consists of Annamese, Tonkinese, and other members of the Sino-Tibetan language family. This wayward offspring of French is extremely tantalizing to the French-speaking visitor who hears it for the first time. The words in his ear are for the most part familiar; yet if he tries to converse in French he meets with a blank look of incomprehension. If, for example, he says to a golden-skinned native in normal grammatical form "J'espère vous revoir" his remark will not be understood; whereas if he had said "Moi content voir vous encore" he might have conjured up a warming smile and a polite "Merci." The chief reason for his difficulty in communication is this: Pidgin French, in its simplified syntax and morphology, has enough differences from French to block immediate understanding.

A second source of difficulty is that the slender work stock, which is largely French, does contain Annamese words which are required in unpredictable places. A rickshaw boy, for instance, will respond promptly to the French commands *tout droit*, *à gauche*, and *à droite*, but will not understand *arrêtez-vous*, and the rider must use the Annamese word [toi] to bring him to a halt.

The purpose of the sketch which follows is to describe in brief the main grammatical features of Pidgin French as it is spoken at Haiphong. The field data were collected while the writer was stationed at Haiphong during World War II. His informants were two Europeans—a Swiss consul and a Russian underground worker, both resident of long standing—and a number of natives with whom he could converse only in Pidgin French. Regular French spelling is used, except for native words and those French words which have acquired an irregular pronunciation; for these exceptions IPA symbols enclosed in brackets are used.

I. PERSONAL PRONOUNS

The personal pronouns, conjunctive and disjunctive, nominative and accusative, are as follows:

	Singular		Plural
1. I, me	moi	we, us	nous
2. you	toi, vous	you	vous
3. he, him	lui	they, them	ils, lui
she, her	lui		
it	lui		

- Examples: 1. Wake me at seven o'clock.
Toi réveiller moi sept heures.
2. They see us.
Lui voir nous.
3. It is raining.
Lui pleuvoir.
4. He is very sick.
Lui [ije'na] beaucoup [mɔlats]. ([mɔlats] = *malade*.) Note that *beaucoup* replaces *très*

The possessive is formed by placing after the noun the preposition *à* plus a personal pronoun.

- Example: My book.
Livre à moi.

II. VERBS

A. The infinitive is the verb form regularly used for all persons, moods, and numbers, and for all tenses except as indicated below and in a few set phrases.

- Examples: 1. When I leave, you follow me.
Quand moi partir toi venir avec moi.
2. Do not leave.
Vous pas partir.
3. Are you having a good time
Toi amuser beaucoup?
4. What did you say?
Toi dire quoi?

B. Completed action is expressed by [i'ja] or [de'za] before the infinitive. ([i'ja] = *il a*; [de'za] = *déjà*.)

- Examples: 1. We have gone.
Nous [i'ja] aller.
2. He has finished his work.
Lui [i'ja] finir travail.

3. I have cleaned it.
Moi [de'za] nettoyer.
4. He has come.
Lui [de'za] venir.

C. Future time is indicated, not by verb form, but by context or adverbs.

- Examples: 1. He will not tell other men.
Lui pas dire autres monsieurs.
2. I will do it.
Moi faire après.
 3. I will see you after the dance.
Moi voir toi après danser finir.

D. All forms of *to be* and *to have*, in the positive, are expressed by [ije'na].

- Examples: 1. Have you a book?
Vous [ije'na] livre?
2. Would you like to go?
Toi [ije'na] content aller?
 3. That is enough.
[ije'na] assez.
 4. You are right.
Toi [ije'na] raison.
 5. What is your name?
Comment [ije'na] nom à vous?
 6. He is very small.
Lui [ije'na] beaucoup petit.
Lui [ije'na] beaucoup [ti'ti].
 7. If the soldiers come there will be trouble.
Si soldats venir [ije'na] beaucoup mauvais.

E. The forms of *to be* and *to have*, in the negative, are expressed by [i'jenəpa], or less frequently by [i'japa]. Both of these words seem to be corruptions of *il n'y a pas*.

- Examples: 1. I have no friend.
Moi [i'jenəpa] ami.
2. We didn't have enough food.
Nous [i'jenəpa] assez manger
 3. He is no good.
Lui [i'japa] bon.

F. Negation is expressed by *pas* before the word to be negated. Before action verbs, however, and occasionally in other situations, the negative is [i'japa].

- Examples: 1. No good
Pas bon.
(The unaspirated *p* often becomes the voiced *b*: hence this frequently heard expression is sounded [babn].)
2. I do not understand.
Moi pas comprendre.
 3. We do not go.
Nous [i'japa] aller.

G. Interrogation is indicated in these ways:

(1) By a raising of the voice at the end of a question.

- Example: Are we going?
Nous aller?
(In Pidgin French no liaison occurs.)

(2) By using *moyen* at the head of a question, or, more commonly, *moyen* or *moyen pas moyen* at the end. This expression is roughly equivalent to *n'est-ce pas*. The longer expression *moyen pas moyen* represents a native grammatical pattern transferred to French.

- Examples: 1. Will you help me?
Moyen toi aider moi?
2. Will you please repeat?
Toi dire encore moyen?
 3. Will you go with me?
Moyen vous aller avec moi?
Vous aller avec moi moyen?
Vous aller avec moi, moyen pas moyen?

(3) By using the pattern: verb + *pas* + verb. This is the native pattern again. Precisely the same one also occurs regularly in Mandarin Chinese.

- Examples: 1. Will you come?
Toi venir pas venir?
2. Do you know?
[konets] pas [konets]?
([konets] = *connaître*.)

H. Necessity is expressed by *il faut* or [dwaə].

- Examples: 1. You must help me.
Il faut beaucoup vous aider moi.
2. You must do this at once.
Toi [dwaə] faire tout de suite.

I. The idea of *can*, *know how* is expressed by [konets].

- Example: Can you shine shoes?
Toi [konets] nettoyer souliers?

III. INTERROGATIVES

The interrogatives are as follows:

Who	Qui
What	Quoi
	Qu'est-ce que
When	Quand
Where	[u'sa]
Why	Pourquoi
How	Comment
Which	Quel (<i>Lequel</i> is never used.)

How many, how much

Combien

- Examples: 1. Who is your friend?
 Qui [ije'na] ami à vous?
 Qui [ije'na] [kamarats]? ([kamarats]
 = *camarade*.)
2. What did you say?
 Quoi toi dire?
 Toi dire quoi?
3. What is the matter?
 Qu'est-ce qu' [i'ja]?
 4. When are you going?
 Quand vous aller?
5. Where are you going?
 [u'sa] aller?
6. Why do you change your mind?
 Pourquoi toi changer?
7. How do you do?
 Comment ça va?
 Comment vous aller?
8. Which piece of soap do you prefer?
 Toi aimer quel [sa'von]?
 9. How many men?
 Combien [zom]?
 10. How many years?
 Combien [zan]?

IV. DEMONSTRATIVE ADJECTIVES

The demonstrative adjectives are *ici* and *là-bas*, placed after the noun, to mean respectively *this*, *these* and *that*, *those*.

- Examples: 1. This book.
 Livre *ici*.
 2. These books.
 Livres *ici*.
 3. That woman.
 Madame *là-bas*.

4. Those women.
 Madames *là-bas*.
 5. I want that rickshaw.
 Moi content [put'put] *là-bas*.

V. RELATIVE PRONOUNS

Relative pronouns are regularly omitted.

Example: The girl whom I saw.
 La fille moi voir. (Not *jeune fille*.)

VI. ARTICLES

The indefinite article is omitted. The definite article is usually omitted but sometimes used. No adequate generalization can be made.

VII. NUMERALS

The numerals are the same as in French, save that the pronunciation is sometimes altered. The cardinal numerals are used as ordinals, except that *première* is used for *first*. The first ten numerals are as follows: [an], *deuz*, *trois*, [kæt], [sæn], [sit], *sept*, [wit], [nap], and [dit]. The initial sound in [wit] is a bi-labial [v].

The foregoing sketch is, of course, no more than a horseback view of Pidgin French grammar, but the writer hopes it may offer a glimpse into the structure of this fascinating tongue and help to brighten a classroom hour with a few exotic blooms.

NORMAN C. STAGEBERG

Iowa State Teachers College

* * *

Thinking is most mysterious, and by far the greatest light upon it that we have is thrown by the study of language. And every language is a vast pattern-system, different from others, in which are culturally ordained the forms and categories by which the personality not only communicates, but also analyzes nature, notices or neglects types of relationships and phenomena, channels his reasoning, and builds the house of his consciousness.

—BENJAMIN LEE WHORF

* * *

Adult Adventures with Modern Languages

IN AUGUST of 1953, the writer attended a World Congress of Physical Education in Istanbul, Turkey; a congress in which English and French were the official languages. (All papers given were also printed in Turkish as well as in English and French.) Twenty-two countries were represented, and the native languages of those countries totaled at least eighteen in number. Almost all of the delegates could communicate fairly fluently in either English or French—and many in German, Spanish, or Italian (the “five scientific languages”). On each person’s identification badge was printed the language in which he could communicate—and frequently these totaled from three to six. This was a contrast to what would usually have been found in a congress of citizens of this country. These were physical educators—not professors of modern languages.

On the way home the writer was riding in a bus in Athens, sharing a seat with a woman. As the bus rounded a corner, the writer (who had fallen asleep) lurched against the lady. Awakening, he asked forgiveness—in English. The lady hesitated, then asked, “Verstehen Sie Deutsch?” Upon being told that he did, she looked relieved and in excellent German apologized for not understanding English: “Ich spreche *nur* (italics, the author’s) Polnisch, Griechisch, Französisch und Deutsch.” *Nur!* Thereupon she explained that she had been born in Poland where she had lived until she was twelve; then she had moved to Athens where she continued her schooling (in Greek). The writer then asked her where she had learned her French and German. In German she replied, “I learned them in the schools.” (Note the verb: she *learned* them. A student in the United States would probably have said that she “took” so many years of German or French—and would probably have been unable to converse in either!)

Throughout many countries in Europe, but especially in the Scandinavian countries, all graduates of standard secondary schools speak

both English and German—usually fairly fluently.

In April of 1955, the writer attended the First Argentinean Congress of Sports Medicine in Buenos Aires. The other visiting lecturers were from Sweden, France, Germany, and Chile. One day the man from Sweden (a world renowned scholar in his field) asked the writer about the quality of a certain course taught in one of the universities of the United States. The writer hesitated, and without revealing the identity of the professor involved, stated what the man from Sweden and the writer both knew to be true, that 60% of the good published research materials in that field are in German, about 15% to 20% in French, and very little in English—and the teacher in question had frequently stated that he had read very little German or French since he passed his language requirements prior to taking his doctor’s degree! “Is he still an instructor?” asked the man from Sweden. The writer was embarrassed to have to reply that he was a full professor. “Ah,” said the man from Sweden, “that could not be in my country. There when we graduate from the secondary school we speak fluently English and German and rather well, French.” The writer was embarrassed to have to explain that in the largest part of the United States the secondary school educational stream was rather wide but very shallow, and was very seldom deep.

A current trend which distresses the writer is that of the growing scarcity of professors conducting and directing research in professional colleges who read even the most essential foreign languages. Recently the writer was shocked to learn that many prominent professors in one of the nation’s better colleges of medicine could not read German—a language rich in the professional literature of medical research—and was further shocked to learn that there was no language requirement for entrance into that college of medicine (when the writer entered the College of Medicine at Johns Hopkins Uni-

versity in 1911, he had to demonstrate reading ability in both German and French).

The writer has elsewhere stressed the need by educators for foreign languages.¹ The writer himself studied Latin for six years, German for six years, French for a year and a half, and Chinese for thirteen years. The Chinese was studied for use in teaching, hence the writer learned to speak it with fluency in two years, but the German and French were learned solely by the reading method—and the writer speaks German poorly, and French not at all, though when it is spoken very slowly and distinctly, he understands perhaps 75% of what is said—if the discussion concerns only the writer's professional field (physical education).

In 1946 the writer was elected President of the Pan American Institute for Physical Education, the congresses of which are conducted in Spanish (and some Portuguese); and the correspondence of the Institute is practically all conducted in Spanish and Portuguese. The writer was therefore forced to study Spanish. Studying it from an excellent primer (by himself), and obtaining the temporary services of a Chilean to teach pronunciation, within six months, studying not more than three hours per week, the writer could *speak* and write South American Spanish better than he could *speak* German. How come? He concentrated on the most common 1500 words in the language, learned to speak with a fair degree of speed (see below), and learned to fill in (from the dictionary) the technical nouns and verbs needed. This was six *months* (of Spanish) versus six *years* (of German). Later the writer studied Portuguese and Italian to read only, and had similar success. Of course, his Latin was a great help in learning the Romance languages, and it was not a help in learning German. Also, German is probably "harder" than are the Romance languages, but the writer also found that in six months of study of Chinese, in which language there are no cognates, he could speak that language much better than he could German.

As a result of these personal experiences with modern languages, the writer has some suggestions which he feels may well be considered by teachers of modern languages.

1. It is as easy to learn to *speak fluently* the most frequent 1500 to 2000 words of a modern

language (and to learn some common idioms) as it is to learn to *read* the usual 3000 words that are studied in most reading courses in the first year. It is much more interesting to learn to speak than to learn to read only, and with a matrix of the most common 1500 to 2000 words, new (technical) vocabulary is readily inserted into the stream of speech. Most reading courses are about ten fathoms over the student's head, and he tends to study largely by the "seek and ye shall find" method—with one finger in the vocabulary. While studying Chinese, the writer gained *fluency* by learning to read and speak connected discourse at a rate of four Chinese characters (syllables) per second. The same can be done with any modern language.

2. If one can speak a language, one can read it (this is not true of Chinese), but not necessarily vice versa. It would seem desirable to teach students to *speak* the rudiments of the most important modern languages they study: for potential scholars at least German and/or French. This is difficult unless the teachers can themselves speak the languages fluently. In the United States this is the exception rather than the rule, especially in the secondary schools—and frequently even in the colleges and universities.

3. Would it be feasible to conduct summer institutes in the universities, the purpose of which would be to teach the language teachers to speak the languages each teaches? (The experiences of Louisiana State University with French are illuminating in this connection.) If the average teacher learns to speak fluently the most common 1500 to 2000 words of the language, he can readily, with some further self study (perhaps with the aid of a phonograph), learn another 1500 to 3000 words—which would be enough to be adequately competent in the spoken language.

The teacher of languages can be a *generalist*, and not have to learn all of the special vocabularies. No one has to know *all* vocabularies of all educational fields. Those students who learn to speak fluently this "basic general vocabulary," could then each one specialize in obtaining command of the vocabularies in his own field. For

¹ C. H. McCloy, "Do Educators Need Foreign Languages?" *The Modern Language Journal*, February, 1955, pp. 77-78.

example, the writer specializes in the vocabularies of physical education, physiology of exercise, mechanics of sports, and sports medicine. He would be lost in the vocabularies of geology, botany, astronomy, dietetics, sociology, or philosophy. Fortunately he is never called upon to discuss those subjects in a foreign language.

4. Each person needs to learn to *speak* only the languages commonly used in professional intercourse. In the case of the writer, he would *like* to be able to *talk* with some degree of fluency in German, Spanish, and French. Any educated Scandinavian professional colleague whom he meets will speak English fluently. The professional may, however, want to learn to *read* other languages, such as Portuguese, Italian, Dutch, and the Scandinavian languages. Fortunately for us, much of the published scientific research materials from Denmark, Finland, Norway, and Sweden is in English or German. This is not true of materials in the professional journals published in those countries. Here one can speed things up by learning to *recognize* those 1500 to 2000 most commonly used words, and the conjugations of the regular verbs and the common irregular verbs. Cognates help much with the Romance languages, and there are many cognates of English or German in the Scandinavian languages, and in Dutch. The dictionary will soon come to be used only four to six times per page—and eventually almost not at all. To those who have studied even high school Latin, such languages as Italian, Spanish, and Portuguese will come easily. French is somewhat more difficult, but not too much so. Are the professors of modern languages ready to call to the attention of such ambitious adult scholars (a) the best elementary texts for such self-teaching purposes, and (b) lists of the most frequently used words? If not—if they know how to teach only by the *hard* way—they will lose many excellent opportunities to be of help to ambitious adult scholars.

The following statements will not make the writer popular in the United States. Education at the secondary and even the college or university level in this country seems geared to a belief in the need for the promulgation and preservation of educational mediocrity. There seems to be little attempt, especially at the secondary school level, to teach for *mastery* of subject mat-

ter. The Scandinavian secondary schools, for example, do much better. Granted, they do not graduate as high a percentage of the population, and they separate the dullards and don't-cares from the cream earlier. They *do*, however, really educate their intelligent upper layer as we do not, except in a few select (largely private) schools and colleges in the United States. The use of foreign languages as tools of scholarship and research are not, of course, the only uses for these languages. The writer feels strongly, however, from much personal experience, that superficial treatment of too much vocabulary is a grave mistake if we expect most college graduates to feel adequately at home in the language studied, and the teaching that aims at *mastery* of *less* would be much more effective. In Iowa, which claims to be one of the more literate states, the following figures were recently published: there are 828 public high schools in Iowa. Of this number only 149 offer *any* foreign language, classical or modern. A total of 97 communities, or 128 schools, offer Latin. A total of 51 communities, or 61 schools, offer Spanish. A total of 16 communities and 16 schools offer French. A total of only 9 communities and 9 schools offer German! There are, therefore, only 69 public high schools in Iowa which offer one or more modern languages. There are 679 public high schools in Iowa which offer no foreign language program at all. While there are undoubtedly some states which have a much better record than this, there are probably numerous other states which are not even that good. If we contrast these figures with those of the secondary schools in any of the Scandinavian countries, or with those of Germany—as well as with many of the other countries of the world—we find that instruction in foreign languages in the United States, the richest country in the world, is decidedly inferior to that in many of the poorer countries of Europe and of South America (French is so well understood in most of the South American countries that visiting lecturers from France, lecturing in French to the university graduates of those Latin American countries, do not need to be interpreted!). Must our educators *always* worship mediocrity or worse, or is there something that can be done about it?

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The New Soviet Foreign Language Program

RECENT developments in the Soviet foreign language program for secondary schools will be of interest to readers of this *Journal*.¹ To understand current trends, it is necessary to review briefly the general status of foreign language instruction in the Soviet Union.²

In August, 1932, the Central Committee of the Communist Party decreed that every graduate of a Soviet secondary school was to have received training in one foreign language. English, German, and French were the languages to be taught. By the middle 1930's standard programs and textbooks for these three languages had been adopted. The main stress was on acquiring reading knowledge. Conversational skill was considered of secondary importance. Foreign language study was and still is begun in the fifth year (class V) of the secondary school and continued to graduation at the end of the tenth year (class X). Thus, the graduate receives six years of instruction. The study of Russian is begun in class I and continued through class X. The same applies to the non-Russian regions of the Soviet Union. Therefore, non-Russian secondary school pupils study two foreign languages, although Russian has never been officially termed "foreign."

On the basis of resolutions adopted at the last (19th) Communist Party Congress concerning major changes in the Soviet secondary school system, the Ministry of Education of the R. S. F. S. R.³ has established a new foreign language program. Basically, it aims at easing the study load of foreign language students by transferring the treatment of numerous grammatical principles to more advanced classes and by reducing the size of required basic vocabularies. The following excerpt from the program will illustrate the shifting of grammatical items:

For the purpose of decreasing the study load in German the following changes have been introduced: the declension and use of the possessive and demonstrative pronouns have been transferred [from V] to VI; the formation and use of the active future has been transferred from VI to VII; the formation and use of the active pluperfect and passive imperfect has been transferred from VII to VIII; the for-

mation of adverbs with the suffixes *-s*, *-ens*, *-lich* has been shifted from VI to VIII; the use of the subjunctive and present conditional in dependent clauses expressing a condition contrary to fact, the use of the subjunctive in indirect discourse . . . have been transferred from IX to X.

In French the grammatical material has been redistributed in a similar manner: personal pronouns . . . and verbs of group 2 have been shifted from V to VI; adjective comparison and the indefinite personal pronoun *on* have been shifted from VI to VII; the adverb is fully treated in VII, whereas in the former program it was studied in both VI and VII; the conditional has been shifted from VII to IX.⁴

Analogous changes have been made in the English program.

The basic required word lists have been reduced. The following are now in effect: 2500 words for French; 2600 words for English and German.

The deceleration of the Soviet language program was probably caused by the following two facts. Firstly, it is generally conceded by Soviet educators that the old program overtaxed the students. Secondly, at the previously mentioned 19th Party Congress the transition to a full ten-year secondary school program for all pupils living in large cities and industrial centers was announced. Formerly, many had been enrolled in the seven-year program. The desire to lighten the work load is quite understandable in view of the resultant mass increase in second-

¹ A valuable source of information on Soviet foreign language instruction is the periodical *Inostrannyye jazyki v shkole* (Foreign Languages in School), Moscow, published six times a year. Especially helpful for this article was O. V. Kosova, "Programma srednej shkoly po inostrannym jazykam na 1955/56 uchebnyj god," (The Secondary School Foreign Language Program for the Academic Year 1955-56), (No. 3, 1955), pp. 3-7.

² For an account of a personal contact with Soviet language teaching see John Van Eerde, "Language Teaching in the Soviet Union," *Modern Language Journal*, XXXVIII (1954), 400-402.

³ The Russian Socialist Federated Soviet Republic, by far the largest and most important of the Soviet Republics. It is inhabited not only by Russians, but by numerous non-Slavic peoples. Similar revisions of language programs in the other Republics may be expected.

⁴ From Kosova, "Programma . . .," pp. 3-4.

ary school enrollment: in 1954 there were 756,000 more pupils in Soviet secondary schools than in 1953.

The new language program is to be put into operation in accordance with the following schedule: for class V in 1955-6; for classes VI and VII in 1956-7; for classes VIII, IX, and X in 1957-8.

Although the new program still stresses reading ability, teachers are urged to pay more attention to developing oral-aural skills. To improve fluency and comprehension, the use of question-answer exercises, conversation drills, audio-visual aids, memorization, dictations, and language records is recommended.

Soviet linguistic theory is at present essentially conservative. Traditional grammatical concepts and definitions are employed. Constant comparison between the phonetic, morphological, and syntactical phenomena of the language studied and the corresponding features of Russian is considered an excellent teaching device. The strictly descriptive, non-comparative approach of the American structuralists is considered inferior and has been the target of bitter attacks by Soviet linguists.⁶

In Russian speaking areas, foreign language instruction is now given four hours weekly in classes V and VI, and three hours weekly in classes VII to X. In non-Russian areas, less time is allotted to foreign language study. Since teachers in non-Russian areas face a difficult problem in covering the prescribed program with fewer hours available, the R. S. F. S. R. Ministry of Education in Moscow has been attempting to help the situation by permitting more local initiative. For example, the Ministry of Education of the Yakut Republic has been allowed to begin language instruction in class VIII. Since the Yakut schools still have at their disposition the same total of hours as when they began in class V, greater concentration is possible in the upper classes: five hours weekly in VIII and IX, and six hours weekly in X.

Soviet language textbooks, which have been generally in use from the middle 30's, are now considered unsatisfactory. At a conference held

in December, 1954 under the auspices of the R. S. F. S. R. Ministry of Education to discuss textbook problems, the following criticisms were made of language texts:

1. Many texts are out-of-date from the point of view of modern methodology.
2. Many give too much material per lesson.
3. Some books suffer from inferior binding, paper and printing. The illustrations are often of poor quality.
4. Questions of grammar are often introduced at a point in the program when the corresponding item has not yet been covered in the Russian language course. Consequently, the desired comparative approach is rendered difficult or impossible.
5. There is in several instances no well-planned transition from one text to its successor. Some items are skipped completely.
6. The reading selections are often colorless and uninteresting.
7. Many grammatical explanations are inaccurate, verbose, and vague.

The creation and publication of new and revised textbooks is considered a top priority need. Since the texts to be published will serve as the basis of the new program, their introduction will be co-ordinated with the schedule mentioned above: for class V in 1955-6; for VI and VII in 1956-7; for VIII, IX, and X in 1957-8.

From the above, it seems clear that the Soviets are deeply concerned about the necessity of improving their foreign language program. Whether much progress is possible without more personal contacts between Soviet citizens and those of the West, remains to be seen.

MORTON BENSON

Ohio University

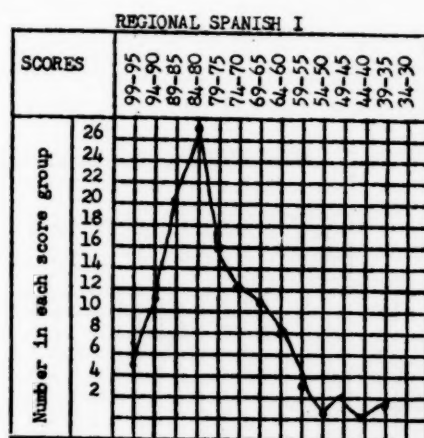
⁶ For criticism of American structural linguistics see L. S. Barxudarov and G. V. Kolshanskij, "Amerikanskij zhurnal 'Language'," *Voprosy jazykoznanija*, (No. 5, 1954), pp. 130-136 and M. M. Guxman, "Lingvisticheskij mexanizm L. Bloomfielda i deskriptivnaja lingvistika," *Trudy instituta jazykoznanija*, IV (1954), 111-189. For an account in English of the 1950 reversal in Soviet linguistic theory see Herbert Rubenstein, "The Recent Conflict in Soviet Linguistics," *Language*, XXVII (1951), 281-287.

Achievement Contest in Spanish in Indiana High Schools

FOR the past three years the Department of Spanish and Portuguese of Indiana University has sponsored an Achievement Contest in the high schools of the state. Two students from any secondary school in Indiana may enter each of the three Spanish contests. Every school is entitled to enter one additional contestant on each of the three levels for every thousand or fraction of a thousand of enrolled students beyond the first 500. The last Saturday in March students with good records in the first two years go with their teachers to a nearby regional center where the packages of examinations are awaiting them. Those with top-ranking scores are then eligible to take the final examinations which are held at the University in Bloomington on the last Saturday in April. Every contestant invited to the finals is given a certificate of superior performance.

The examinations for the first and second-year students are based on the three texts adopted by the high schools in the state, and since 1954 have been prepared by those high school teachers who do not have entrants in the contest. The examination for Spanish III and the audition test are prepared by the writer of this article. All examinations written at the regional centers are sent to the University so that the accuracy of the grading can be checked. Both the regional and final examinations are graded by the teachers who administer them. Keys are supplied so that the rating can be as nearly objective as possible. In every case the number of points for each question is stated and the directions specify how the parts shall be scored. Reading passages for evaluating comprehension, fill-in exercises, multiple choice vocabulary and idiom tests, and sentences for determining a knowledge of syntax make up the principal types of questions used on the examinations for the three levels. The average time for writing an examination is less than two hours.

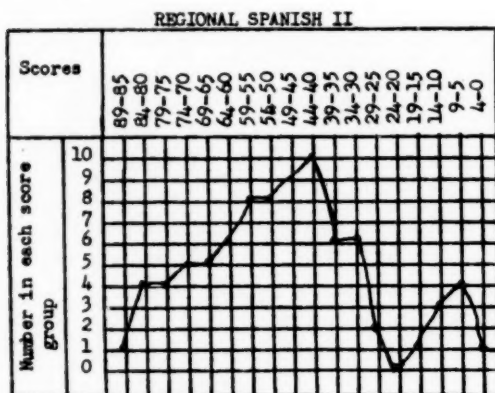
At the regional examination for Spanish I in the spring of 1955, one hundred and fifteen took the test. The curve below shows their scores. 100 was the highest grade obtainable. The top-ranking 40% were eligible for the finals. Typical questions required a knowledge



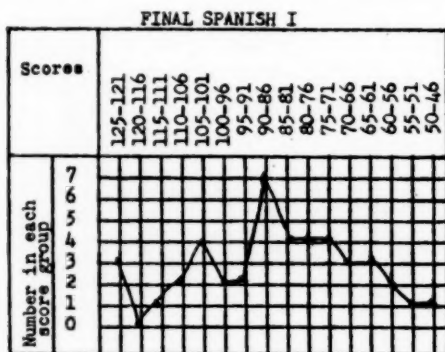
of the present, imperfect, preterite, and the present perfect of the indicative mood of verbs, the conversion of affirmative statements into questions, common idioms, etc. Questions based on a story in Spanish tested the student's comprehension of minute details. Cultural material also received some attention; here the student was expected to make brief comments about geographical regions, picturesque types, and historical figures of Spain and Spanish America.

Forty-one students took the regional examination for Spanish II. The curve below shows the results. 100 was the highest score obtainable. The top-ranking 50% were eligible for the finals. Spanish II, being of a more advanced nature, had questions of the pronoun (indirect, direct, and object of the preposition), use of the subjunctive and prepositions, the translations of idiomatic expressions into Spanish, exercises requiring the use of the

impersonal, possessive pronouns and adjectives, relative pronouns, etc.



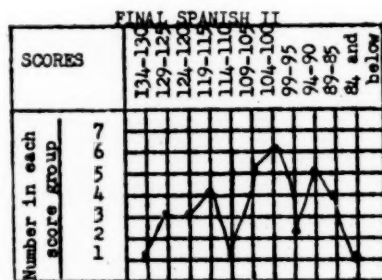
The curve made on 43 examinations at the finals in Spanish I is shown below. The highest possible score was 145. On this examination,



which covered additional material drawn from the three books adopted in the state, the students had questions concerned with the comparative and superlative degrees, cardinal and ordinal numbers, substitutions of pronouns for nouns, the translation of interrogative expressions, the proper use of relative pronouns, and the choice of suitable tenses and adverbs. Idiomatic expressions and questions on cultural material were also included. Several questions in English tested their comprehension of a passage in Spanish.

The curve below shows the score made by thirty-five students on the final examination in Spanish II. The highest possible score was 145 points. On this test students had to answer in Spanish questions such as the following:

1. ¿En qué mes del año tienen lugar los exámenes finales?
2. ¿Qué clases de helados prefiere usted?



3. ¿Qué alimentos nos da la vaca?
4. ¿Cuánto se le devolvería al dar un dólar para comprar diez sellos aéreos de a seis centavos?
5. ¿Cuáles son las ventajas en viajar en avión?

Another question required that the student give verbs with meanings opposite to those listed. In still another he had to put the main verb in the conditional and change other verbs so as to make the sentence correct. There were 10 sentences and a long passage containing idiomatic expressions to be translated into English. Questions based on said passage, which was as difficult as any found in most modern novels, tested the student's comprehension.

The number of contestants in Spanish III was small, so I do not show a curve of their scores. Since there are no state adopted texts at this level, the examination could not be based on books used in the various high schools. The material in the main corresponded with what the colleges are doing in intermediate Spanish. One question required the substitution of words or phrases for others of equivalent meaning. Ample testing was done on the subjunctive. Questions on cultural material were more specific and required a wider reading in books pertaining to Spain and Spanish America. The material for testing idiomatic expressions was much more difficult than on the other examinations. The idioms were by no means the most current ones. The passage for determining reading skill would be comparable with that in any modern novel or play.

A native speaker, unknown to all of the contestants, served as reader for the audition test. Contestants on all three levels took the same audition test. For the first part as the reader pronounced a word or phrase twice, the student placed an "x" opposite the word or phrase which he thought he heard. The three possible choices sounded pretty much alike. For ex-

ample: (1) *venfa, vendía vencía*; (2) *vista, visita, visto*; (3) *se sabe, se sale, se sube*; (4) *al devolver, al volver, al revolver*. For Part II, a statement lacking a final word or phrase was read twice. There were five choices for the completion of each sentence. The contestant had to select the one which completed the answer most reasonably. Typical statements were:

1. El hombre tiene: (a) dos cabezas (b) cuatro pies (c) diez dedos (d) muchos ojos (e) tres brazos.
2. La familia entra en el comedor para: (a) jugar (b) leer (c) vestirse (d) comprar (e) comer.
3. El reloj marca: (a) el verano (b) el frío (c) las horas (d) el invierno (e) el calor.

In Part III the contestant listened to a passage about one-half a page in length. The first reading was at a normal speed, the second quite a bit slower. There were 10 questions of a specific nature about the passage to be answered in English.

The Achievement Contest arouses a healthy spirit of competition among the best students in the participating schools, for it offers a challenge to those of superior ability. The teachers are enthusiastic about it. If they weren't, they wouldn't travel to Bloomington or the regional center and spend half a day correcting papers. Students from private as well as public schools have won the gold, silver, and bronze medals awarded by the University to approximately the top-ranking 20% of the contestants in the finals. Every year there are contestants from both small and large secondary schools. Teachers whose pupils have not participated in the

past frequently write in the fall to the Division of Adult Education ordering previously used examinations and keys. The Achievement Program has aided in focusing attention on the study of Spanish in the state and winning recognition for students of superior accomplishment. All the winners who have continued the study of Spanish at Indiana University have earned A or B during their first semester in residence, thereby proving themselves to be very acceptable students. Obviously, then, these tests not only rate the student in competition with his fellow contestants, but also measure quite accurately his knowledge of the language. In consequence, they are a valid criterion for predicting the student's probability of success in Spanish courses in college. Every spring the office of the High-School Achievement Program sends to colleges in Indiana and neighboring states a list of the students ranking high on the final examinations.

The University prepares special programs for those who come to the campus. At noon there is luncheon followed by entertainment for all of the participants. The Department of Spanish and Portuguese arranges for a lecture in Spanish on some phase of Spain or Spanish America. Frequently there is a little skit or play and always some music. At the presentation of the medals, someone representing the University Administration makes an address. The president of the Indiana Association of Teachers of Spanish and Portuguese is usually invited to present the awards in Spanish.

HARVEY L. JOHNSON

Indiana University

* * *

Despite all philosophical attempts to break down languages into groups, the fact remains that speech itself is the most common denominator of all peoples. The tongue that could speak and not just swallow is the great wonder of man's far-off antiquity. Such a wonder could have happened only once. Where? How? When? The answer fails.

—DAGOBERT D. RUNES

* * *

The Administrative Organization of Language Teaching

TO ANYONE who has kept in touch with foreign language teaching in the United States, the word for what has happened in that field since World War II must lie between "renaissance" and "revolution." To the present writer, the stronger word is far from inappropriate: for "renaissance" implies a return to a higher level, and Heaven knows that American language teaching before 1940 had no such level to return to, except perhaps in respect of enrollment.

The teacher of a European language in the United States in the pre-war period often did not speak the language and did not even read it without some difficulty; he or she had never seen the country where it was used, and could only drill the students on highly abstract rules of grammar, and train them to write *la plume de ma tante est sous la table*. (One teacher in the writer's experience used to teach her pupils to sing *allons, enfants de la patrie, le jour de gloire est arrivé; conteur nous de la tyrannie, l'étendard sanglant élève*.)

Today the American high school or college student is often fortunate in having a teacher who lived in France or Belgium or Germany for a couple of years by courtesy of the Wehrmacht, and "picked up the lingo" to the point where he could freely patronize all the most colorful off-limits spots. Today's students are also the beneficiaries of many new methods and techniques in the teaching of languages, starting with the much-discussed "Army method" (whose real secret, by the way, was recognition of the fact that learning another language takes practice—a fact implicitly denied by college authorities who whittled down the time allotted to it from five periods a week to four and then three, and then observed that, since the teachers weren't producing very brilliant results with three periods a week, the subject had better be eliminated altogether).

The improvement in personnel will not be

permanent, though from now on it will be easier for the American teacher of a European language to visit Europe. The improvement in methods, however, is likely to continue and grow even more spectacular, for this latter is really the eventual application to the classroom of the discoveries made in the scientific study of languages during the last half-century. In other words, it is not rash to declare that many of the innovations in language teaching methods since World War II—some of which have produced such impressive results—are the result of the bringing to bear of scientific linguistics on language teaching.

Now, this fact must necessarily have ultimate repercussions on the *administration* of language teaching. If schools and colleges are to derive maximum benefit, as represented by outstanding achievement on the part of their students, from the new methods now available, it will be necessary for administrative officers to give scope to these improvements in such things as recruitment of staff and setting departmental objectives. And here is where some difficulties will arise. For in most schools those who hold the administrative authority in the language divisions, or whose voices are most influential there, are naturally the senior members of the staff—that is, generally those who represent the pre-1940 viewpoint. It is no accident that the schools and colleges which are currently accomplishing the most in training American students in other languages are generally those smaller ones which have only recently developed language departments of significant size, or those where all the staff members happen to be relatively young.

The language teacher representing the pre-war or traditional attitude was one who was really interested only in literature, and was always just a little annoyed at having to spend his time teaching the students the language before they could read the literature. (This

tradition was, no doubt, ultimately founded in the fact that in the European educational systems learning the language was done in the lower years of the secondary school, and was not a university subject at all.) He was therefore no specialist on how to impart the basic skills in the foreign language, and accepted without criticism the traditional assumption that memorization of the "rules" of a traditional grammar would do the trick. He was not much interested in speaking or oral comprehension (often he himself spoke the language with a marked English accent), and considered the ability to read the only really important foreign-language skill needed by the educated man. If he was a native of Europe, his preoccupation with literature and his commitment to traditional grammar was likely to be even greater.

This portrait is not intended to be unsympathetic; it is in many respects very solidly founded. The liberal-education value of foreign language study really lies mainly in the study of foreign literature—it will be noted that the study of literature has always been a keystone of all programs of liberal education, even as far back as the days of Socrates and Plato. And even today, the average American student will probably pass through life without any pressing need or use for fluent oral command of a second language, while every such student could profitably use the lesser degree of attainment represented by a reading knowledge.

There are two weaknesses in the traditional viewpoint, however. The first is that a language is a living thing and has to be treated as such; to dissect it is to kill it; the ability to read must be reached through the ability to speak (at least in some degree), and when languages are taught this way they interest students—when taught analytically, they prove boring. It was a century or more of teaching languages analytically which almost killed off foreign language study in the U.S.; it is less than a decade of teaching them vitally that has given us grounds to talk of a "renaissance."

Secondly, it is no surprise that the traditional language teacher is not outstandingly successful at imparting the basic skills, if that is an aspect of the subject in which he is not primarily interested. But since the high schools

have abdicated this task (as they have most of their educational tasks in favor of an inferior kind of trade apprenticeship), it has to be done in college; and if it is not well done there, nobody will go on to study literature, and the traditional teacher will find himself passé anyhow.

It adds up to this, that the "traditional" language teacher represents a valuable viewpoint which we cannot afford to dispense with; but we badly need a different type of teacher to handle the job of basic foreign-language instruction. In most contemporary schools and colleges these two different needs have not even been recognized, much less reconciled. Some institutions have modern language departments staffed entirely with young, eager linguistics men, who are not primarily interested or qualified in literature. One fears that their students, in the ridiculously short time which those who do study foreign languages devote to such courses, acquire too little speaking fluency to be of any real use, and neglect reading and literature altogether. Many more institutions have departments dominated by elderly associate professors who are recognized authorities on the seventeenth century—and spend their spare time arranging to frustrate the radical ideas of the young "linguisticists" in the lower echelons of the staff.

To the present writer the solution seems to lie in a relatively simple change of administrative policy: let us clearly distinguish the study of literature from the task of imparting linguistic skills. For the latter task let us form a "Department of Languages and Linguistics," which would look after *linguistic* instruction in all the languages offered by the school—including classical languages and English. (We may confidently predict that striking gains will be scored in improving students' linguistic skills even in their native language, when this job is given over to experts in the science of language.) The Departments of French, German, Spanish, and so on, would then become the Departments of French Literature, German Literature, and the like. (Except for "remedial" courses, the English Department is already as a rule the Department of English Literature. Many colleges have no one on the English Department staff who has more than a per-

functory knowledge of English as a *language*.) In smaller schools, perhaps only one Department of Foreign Literatures would be required—especially since its offerings would consist mostly of the “elective” courses, and it might be necessary to unite all of these to provide a full schedule for one or two professors. In universities organized on a departmental basis (as eventually all should be), the Departments of Foreign Literatures would naturally handle almost all the graduate-school courses. Where divisional organization is desirable, the Department of Languages and Linguistics plus the literature departments would make a natural Division of Languages and Literatures.

It will take relatively little reflection, the writer believes, to become convinced of the many advantages of this arrangement. The professors of literature—including English literature—would be freed of irksome invasions of their time by elementary language courses; this would probably give them more time for reading and research and otherwise improve their lectures on literature. As far as these professors were concerned, indeed, college standards would have been brought back to where they were before general educational inflation and the collapse of the high schools as educational institutions. They could correctly assume that their students at least read the foreign language fluently upon entering their classes.

On the other hand, the professors trained in linguistics could get down to the job of giving students a real grasp of a foreign language with the help of the methods proven most effective, unhampered by dragging of the feet on the part of older men who instinctively fear being ousted from the field to which their careers have been devoted. In some universities today theories are made the basis of instruction in, say, the French Department which members of the Department of Linguistics regard as having been exploded 25 years ago.

In every administrative organization changing conditions may bring about the situation that the same unit is trying to do two essentially distinct jobs. Merely recognizing this fact can often lead to improvement of its performance in one or both; but ideally the organizational structure should be altered so that each

task has an organization aimed directly at it. It is the writer's contention that this situation has arisen in foreign language teaching—that the language department of today is trying to do two different things which overlap, to be sure, but are essentially distinct.

It goes without saying that training in linguistics should be expected of every candidate for a position on the staff of the Department of Languages and Linguistics—and we mean genuine linguistics, not a course in phonetics or in the history of a language (developed from the viewpoint of the neogrammarians of sixty years ago) which the Department of French or German or Spanish is likely to call “linguistics.” The department head who adopts this principle in recruitment will soon come up against the difficulty that teachers so trained are in short supply. It is lamentable, not that the field of linguistics has developed so rapidly, but that in so doing it has largely lost touch with related fields; linguistics journals today tend to be read only by other “linguisticists,” because of the multiplicity of recently-coined technical terms which tend to make their language a jargon rather hard to read for the non-specialist. As a result the science has not had the influence on either the teaching profession or the general public that it should and could have.

But if the formation of Departments of Languages and Linguistics were to become general, linguistic science would not only become much better known among educators, but the source of supply of its own new recruits would be greatly broadened; for besides training the general college population in foreign languages, such departments could also offer “seed” courses in linguistics for future teachers. As more linguistically-trained teachers began demonstrating in the country's school systems what they could do, the demand for such teachers would certainly expand, and so, as a consequence, would the training to produce them. So many things in education proceed with a spiral motion like this, and the problem is always where and how to start the ball rolling.

Some of the ideas proposed in this paper may seem radical to many of those now in the profession of language teaching. In the writer's

belief, however, one of the merits of these proposals is that they can be tried out without any risk or damage to anybody. If a Department of Languages and Linguistics is set up, and linguistics does not prove to be the key to better language teaching which it is here assumed to be, that Department will simply wither and die; meantime the other teachers of languages can pursue their preferred course without interference. If the new department proves to be a brilliant success, this would in no way undermine the literature departments, but actually benefit them by turning out a larger number of students able to study literature. (The willingness, in most such students, may be taken for granted; experience shows that as soon as a student is given enough skill in a second language so that he can *do* something with it, he is eager to exercise this skill, like the small boy who has learned to do backward somersaults and does them on the slightest excuse.)

The trials and tribulations of the profession of foreign-language teaching in the United States in the last half-century may prove to have been a salutary purgatory, leading ultimately to—hardly paradise, but a better position than it has ever enjoyed. For all lib-

eral arts subjects have suffered greatly during this period, owing mainly to the fact that the term "education" really has no concrete meaning for most American educators; for one thing, it has in this country never been really distinct from apprenticeship to a trade. Teachers of language, more than others, have had to search their souls, prove that what they could do was "worth while," learn to do even more worthwhile things and prove that they could do those.

Foreign languages are now becoming, for certain small segments of the population, a means of making money—hence they are beginning to acquire the essential qualification for a really secure status in the American educational system. The most vital task facing language teachers today is to organize themselves to deliver dependably the commercial product; this done, an increasing number of American students may be induced by benign subterfuge to enjoy the educational benefits of the subject. The writer hopes (and believes) that the proposals made in this paper will be a contribution of some weight to a genuine renaissance in our field.

JOHN P. HUGHES

St. Peter's College

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CENTRAL STATES MODERN LANGUAGE TEACHERS ASSOCIATION

The annual meeting of the Central States Modern Language Teachers Association will be held at the Conrad Hilton Hotel in Chicago on May 4-5. There will be section meetings in Teaching Methods on Friday afternoon, and on Saturday afternoon there will be section meetings in French, Italian, Scandinavian languages, Slavic languages, and Spanish and Portuguese. There will be special luncheons on Saturday for each section, and a dinner on Friday evening at which the main speaker will be Dr. Henry Lee Smith, Jr., Department of State, who will speak on "Little Known Factors in the Communication Situation." At the general meeting on Saturday morning, one of the main speakers will be Dr. Vincenzo Cioffari, whose subject is "The Function of Modern Language Study in the U. S. Educational System."

* * *

The General Language Course at Washington Irving High School

ABOUT ten years ago a course in general language was introduced into foreign language departments in New York City. A textbook called "General Language—English and its Foreign Relations," by Miss Lillie Lindquist, Supervisor of Foreign Languages in the Detroit Public Schools, had been published in 1940. This book was intended in that City for junior high school students, but was admirably suited in the simplicity of its language for the entering senior high school students of low ability who were just then beginning to appear in increasingly large numbers. The stated aims of the book were threefold: first, a survey course in language; second, a course in English; and third, a gateway to the foreign languages.

We were not sure which of these aims would emerge as most valid for our students, but Washington Irving High School, which has for fifty years been an innovator in meeting the changing needs of its student body, introduced the course with high hopes. We then offered, and continue to offer, either one or two terms of general language, as miscellaneous credits toward a diploma.

Since to my knowledge a number of other New York City High Schools started a similar course at about the same time, I wrote to Dr. Huebener, Director of Foreign Languages for New York City, to inquire how many schools still give such a course. I was amazed to learn that no other senior high school now gives this course and that only one junior high school, 126 Brooklyn, offers such a course. Obviously, our low calibre students are no different from those in other schools; so, since we have uninterruptedly had one or two classes per term in this subject, my conclusion perforce was that either our methods or our subject matter, or both, were *sui generis*. A discussion of the qualifications of the teacher of such a course would be highly relevant at this point, but I shall postpone it for a moment.

As we plan our course, it is offered to two main types of students: first, to those who apply for a foreign language but whose I.Q. and reading grade show them unable to cope with a regular language course at that time; second, to those who are recommended by their language teachers.

You may be interested in the make-up of the present group. Of a class register of thirty-two:

- 6 have no recorded I.Q.'s,
- 7 have I.Q.'s between 66 and 75,
- 8 have I.Q.'s between 76 and 85,
- 7 have I.Q.'s between 86 and 95, and only
- 4 have I.Q.'s over 95.

These last four girls are girls who previously passed one term of a foreign language, then dropped out. They were given a term of general language to complete a year's language credit. They are obviously atypical students.

The reading grades of these girls, who range from first to sixth term, (i.e. ninth to eleventh year) are:

- No recorded Reading Grade—2 girls
- 4th year Reading Grade— 2 girls
- 5th year Reading Grade— 3 girls
- 6th year Reading Grade—12 girls
- 7th year Reading Grade— 4 girls
- 8th year Reading Grade— 4 girls
- 9th year Reading Grade— 2 girls
- 10th year Reading Grade— 1 girl
- 11th year Reading Grade— 2 girls

These last three groups include the same girls I mentioned a moment ago.

In addition to this group of girls, selected by their grade advisers in the program committee, there is a second group of girls, who are recommended by their language teachers as completely unfit to remain in the language class. Thus you can see that this group may truly be labelled "élite"—"élu" either by the grade adviser or by the language teacher.

The first meeting of the class is of capital importance. It is then that the teacher can set the tone most effectively. Upon questioning

the members of the class, the teacher learns that the student hasn't the faintest idea of why she is in the class or what she expects to learn there.

The story of Helen Keller makes an excellent point of departure. The story is generally new to the students, as is almost any story that the teacher will tell during the course. The utter loneliness of her isolation is a dramatic revelation; from there, it is but a step to bringing out the privilege that each student has of communicating normally, and the obligation, in payment for this privilege, of improving each of the avenues of human communication.

Always, in a girls' school, a key word in our motivation is grooming. In as tactful and friendly a manner as possible, the teacher explains during that first lesson that all the arts of becoming dress, coiffure, and make-up are, in the long run, valueless, if, upon opening her mouth to speak, a girl reveals herself as slovenly, unkempt or neglected in her speech. (A brief discussion of the speaking techniques of radio stars, whom all know extremely well, drives this point home.) One goes on to explain that everything that has to do with the art of communication—a good vocabulary, clear, audible and pleasing speech, legible handwriting, the ability to read aloud (the list could go on much further) all is relevant to the individual language grooming which the student is to get. Thus, you see, we cut across the fields of speech, English, foreign language, and as I will soon show, history and current events as well.

The second big idea to get across is that each student is competing, not with others in the class, but with herself. If, she is told, she has visibly improved during the term in one or more of the arts of language, then she has succeeded and is entitled to pass the course. Under such circumstances it would take complete lack of effort and cooperation *not* to pass.

This release from competitive pressure is of tremendous importance. It aids the teacher, since there is no set goal at which she must arrive. As for the students, it may well be the first school experience in which these students have not felt inadequate. If, in addition, their pride has been stimulated by our discussion of language grooming, a feeling of self-confidence is well on the way to being built up.

This, then, is truly a child-centered course; its very nature is fluidity, but its saving grace lies in the fact that it is anything but vague. We have definite goals of strengthening the basic skills of speech, reading and writing, and of building up the English vocabulary through the use of several foreign languages. At this point, the qualifications of the teacher might well be taken up. The teacher must know more than one foreign language. Even more important, she must be patient, friendly, and warm, and meet the student on the latter's level of achievement, however low that may be, without ever showing anything but sympathetic understanding. These qualities of mind and of heart are indispensable.

Perhaps the description of a class period, as conducted this term, would be helpful. At least four activities are completed during each period; thus, nothing lasts more than ten minutes at a time. This strains no one's attention span.

1. We regularly begin with a two-minute radio or a television speech. A radio speech is made from the back of the room where the speaker need not face her audience; when she has increased sufficiently in her poise, she comes to the front of the room and is said to be making a television speech. The choice of the moment of readiness is hers. In either case the audience is asked to listen courteously to this two-minute speech and then to offer comment. The speaker then calls upon those who have raised their hands. It is a real joy to see the members of the audience learn to say complimentary and constructive things. Such criticism benefits both the speaker and the member of the audience making the comment. In fact, the very act of uttering a positive, constructive criticism or of giving a deserved compliment makes that girl a warmer, friendlier part of the group. The speaker's voice, intonation and clarity, are commented upon—her posture, as well, if she has made a television speech. The subject matter of these short speeches leans largely to autobiographies, for very few of these students are capable of even simple generalizations. This, in turn, brings excellent results. The girls get to know each other, and often free discussion ensues and general principles emerge in a friendly and democratic atmosphere. Chiefly, the fact

that this radio or television speech is daily and automatic removes any feeling of being singled out, and seems to militate against the student's fear of an audience.

2. Next comes the daily Latin or Greek root. Derivatives of this root have been put on the board at the beginning of the period and are at this point corrected. The class has been taught how to find English derivatives in the dictionary, to check both spelling and meaning of the English derivatives, to use some common prefixes and suffixes in forming a derivative, and to use one previously unknown word in a self-explanatory English sentence. This is a large and unvarying part of our work.

3. Third, we take up a French expression commonly used in English, such as *savoir faire*, *esprit de corps*, *tête à tête*, *coup d'état*, etc. Very often the English equivalent of these expressions must first be explained, and opens, I feel, a small window on a new horizon. In teaching *coup d'état*, for example, I discovered that no girl knew the meaning of the English word "revolution", and found myself telling as an exciting story the history of the French Revolution, beginning with Marie Antoinette's arrival as an Austrian bride and describing her famous "Let them eat cake!"

As an alternative, we have started this term Spanish sentences useful for nurses' aides (furnished by A. A. T. F. Bureau, Brooklyn College), since I discovered that over half the class plans to go in for nursing. But the French expressions seem to have an irresistible snob appeal for the girls and were missed. Now we try to fit in both the French and the Spanish daily.

4. Last, we have a varying activity. On Mondays there is a prepared poetry reading, followed by discussion of both delivery and content. On Fridays we have a debate on a topic of current interest chosen by the students, with a student moderator. The other three days of the week we read aloud from the general language textbook. Reading aloud, I have found, is rapidly becoming a lost art, but it is easily taught. After we have learned to stress accuracy and intonation, we then practice phrasing, and we discover that it is as simple as this one formula: Let your eye travel a split second faster than your lips.

These are but the basic activities. Many

other incidental ones are taken up as they seem needed. For example, when a number of the student's handwritings appeared almost as incorrect and as illegible as those recently featured in the Daily News exposé, I offered extra credit for what is known as "spelling home work"—that is, copying correctly any short paragraph from the textbook with i's dotted, t's crossed, and punctuation correct. This, in turn, led to a lesson in writing the alphabet, and so low is the level of linguistic *savoir faire* in the class that the students were grateful. In addition, every day sees three or four "outside experiences" related. One girl recognized the word "blasé" on the Dragnet program. Another greeted a Spanish neighbor in Spanish. A third was able to define a word in her English class, and so on. No period is ever long enough—the bell always rings too soon.

The results? All to the good, as far as I can see. The work may demand much ingenuity and patience on the part of the teacher but it also brings a deep sense of satisfaction. As for the girls, they want what we all want—status, appreciation, affection, help, and a place in the sun. It is deeply gratifying to see them respond to these stimuli. A few clearly detectible results are these:

1. First, the students enjoy the class. For many it is the place where they first feel free to speak, to make mistakes perhaps, to express themselves. As a proof of their enjoyment, all those whose academic programs allowed them to continue, voted for a second term of general language, so that the present group has more than half of its students who began the course last September. Fun is a vital part of learning, in my opinion, and a word too rarely met in pedagogical discussions.

2. The girl comes out of her shell, learns to speak up, to listen, to know and like her neighbor, and by that circuitous route to like herself.

3. She gets personalized intellectual help at the level she needs it, and acquires an awareness and good habits that may well stay with her far longer than much of the factual information she learns in school. One girl told the class that her English teacher had informed her that her reading grade had gone up two years in her one term of general language.

Another stated that for the first time she had learned not to fear using the dictionary and now used it regularly for all her subjects.

4. A few girls enroll in a regular foreign language course.

5. Chiefly, the student gains dignity and status, not on any false premises, nor through any second class watered down pabulum, but via first class training in etymology and in basic skills.

The esprit de corps is a beautiful thing to see. We have had numerous visitors whom the class has welcomed and assisted. When a teacher from Northport High School came to observe, with a view toward starting a general language course in her school, the girls were enthusiastic in describing to her the benefits which they had received. Two student teachers who are working on their Master's theses at Teachers College were given an equally warm welcome. Our principal, Dr. Meade, was also so pleased with what she saw in the class that she suggested extending the course to commercial students of low ability, for whom we might perhaps modify the course slightly to include commercial Spanish.

What I have just described is what we are doing this term. Last term our schedule was different in a number of respects. We did have Latin and Greek roots and English derivatives, for I feel that this work is basic, but we also covered parts of speech in English grammar, and spent considerable time on Greek mythol-

ogy, which has given the English language so many words. Some years ago, our first-term General Language class became interested in the history and development of language; the class scrap book of that term features the seven wonders of the ancient world, Egyptian hieroglyphics and so forth. To the prospective teacher of a course such as I have been describing I should like to say that many of the subjects I have mentioned were found in, or suggested by the textbook which we use. I think you will find it, as I have, extremely helpful.

As you see, for the last term's grammar and mythology, we have this term substituted Spanish for nurses' aides. Next term only the needs of the class can determine what the variable will be. In short, as I said before, the objectives of the course are clear, but the paths toward their achievement are almost limitless. The teacher has infinite opportunity for exploration and development. Probably the course will never be given twice in exactly the same way. However, invariably the results are the same: a valid cultural development of the student, her integration into the intellectual community of the school, and her gain in insight into the relationship of fields of learning. As a matter of fact, such a general language course might well be compared to and called general education.

SYLVIA NARINS LEVY

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In the past, the most usual charge flung at foreign languages was that students did not achieve a mastery of them, and even if they did, had no opportunity to use them. I never could figure out why languages were the only subjects required to defend themselves against that charge. When I look back over my own high-school studies, I must confess that I never achieved a mastery over most of them and have had little chance since then to get rich by using what I did learn.

—WILLIS KNAPP JONES

* * *

Grammar in the Aural-Oral Language Course

THE problem of grammar in the teaching of foreign languages is not a new one. Ever since the 1880's and especially during this century there has been a steady relaxation of our demands with respect to abstract grammatical mastery by our high school and college students, coupled with a reorientation toward new objectives.

In part, this reflects the constant broadening of the base of American education. As higher education becomes more and more universal and as teachers are fearful of bringing discredit on themselves by failing more than a set proportion of students, language courses like others are made progressively less intellectualistic and austere.

A second cause has been the direct influence of the philosopher John Dewey, partly through his direct criticism of then-existing methodology and his advocacy of less abstract teaching goals, and partly through the general pragmatism of his philosophy, which in turn simply expresses and justifies the pragmatic attitude typical of American life. Largely through the influence of Dewey, no one any longer defends language teaching as a formal discipline; all objectives are stated as skills. This tends to the disadvantage of grammar, which is merely ancillary to the skills in question.

A further influence has been the Coleman Report of 1929. Algernon Coleman ascertained that 85 per cent of language students pursued the subject for only two years, and the abilities they gained were found to be ridiculously slight even on the basis of what one might expect after two years' work—whether one measured in terms of grammar, reading, writing, speaking, or in any other way. This led him to a critical reexamination of language teaching. He proposed that the objective be restricted to reading ability and that the entire course be adjusted to that objective, so that by setting more modest goals and concentrating on their attainment we might at least achieve something instead of dissipating our efforts in

several directions. Grammar, he stated, should be limited to the passive type, namely the ability to recognize grammatical relationships in the course of reading. The opposite, active mastery, or the ability to indicate grammatical relationships as well as be aware of them, should be postponed until after the first two years, for the 15 per cent of students still continuing their language studies. The 85 per cent thenceforth received something more like 100 per cent of the attention of textbook authors, such as Hagboldt and Kaufman, who provided reading materials artificially tailored to the needs of the new course. Such reading material could indeed be understood without any great knowledge of grammar, being composed of very simple, straightforward sentences not too unlike English in their organization. So both from the theoretical and from the practical point of view, the reading objective gained great plausibility and was further reenforced by books on foreign language methodology such as those of Handschin and Cole, which favored the reading objective as the goal of language teaching. Textbooks were or claimed to be geared to a reading objective for a long time after the Coleman Report, and some still are.

What strikes one perhaps most strongly now does not seem to have struck many at that time. That is the defeatist acceptance of the two-year limitation and its consequences implicit in the Coleman Report and all that followed from it. Today, in contrast, we seek to gain more time by beginning language instruction in the grades and to make more intensive use of the time we have, especially through the use of oral-aural apparatus, which makes possible 100 per cent efficient utilization of time spent in drill and practice. One today is further struck by the isolationist sentiment behind this former attitude. The foreign country was physically and mentally remote; one's only contact with it was through reading. One was content with one-way communication, and even that of a limited and imperfect type.

Things drifted on in this way until the second World War and the resultant more or less definitive change in our isolationist attitude. One saw that the foreign countries were not at all remote in terms of modern travel and communication, that we needed them and needed two-way communication with them. One gained a more vivid awareness of foreign countries. What the educational system had not produced, and had found all sorts of excuses for not producing, the Army produced for itself through its A.S.T.P. program—people who really knew the foreign language well enough to communicate by means of it. The A.S.T.P. program restored the objective of active mastery and caused a revolution in methodology. The initial high hopes were somewhat disappointed, it is true; but with the widespread use of new oral-aural apparatus and new techniques, at least our reasonable hopes have been fulfilled in practice. Even now we are accomplishing what Coleman would have called impossible; and both apparatus and methodology are still in their infancy.

Now that the reading objective has been largely supplanted by the goal of active mastery, it is inevitable that our attitude toward grammar must be reexamined. Students will obviously need much more grammatical mastery if they are to use the grammatical forms in speech and writing and not merely understand (or ignore) them in the course of reading. This implication may not yet be universally accepted, but it is there. Failing such acceptance, the new course must degenerate into barren phrase-learning.

Not only must our attitude toward grammar be thus revised; in order to accomplish this revision we must resolve an old controversy concerning grammar. To some, "grammar" means a body of abstract rules, paradigms, and the like—an intellectualistic, abstract, purely formal system to which language is "obedient." Others, with an eye more to concrete reality, speak of "functional" grammar. Every English-speaking person knows grammar in a functional sense if he habitually says "I was here yesterday" and so does every speaker of German if he habitually reverses the adverbs and says "Ich war gestern hier." Functional grammar is simply an habitual tendency, how-

ever acquired, to express oneself in a certain form and to anticipate the same form from others. Each view of the matter has its corresponding reality. There is formal grammar and functional grammar, and in a sense each enjoys a separate existence. Everyone has had pupils who had much formal mastery but little functional mastery; most native speakers present the reverse situation—they have the feel but not the rule. As between the two, formal and functional grammar, only the second can be considered as a course objective.

The two things are often presented to us in the form of an iron-clad choice, as if one could not choose both; but it is clear that they are not exclusive of each other. They can cooperate and certainly should. Formal grammar is a means toward gaining functional grammar. It is not the only means, but in view of our time limitation it is one necessary means. Even if the degree of its efficacy is unknown, one justifiably feels that it has some considerable efficacy if properly used. A moment's consideration will show that the alleged choice in terms of which so much controversy has raged is iron-clad only on paper. For example, one intending to teach only formal grammar uses exercises in which the students fill in grammatical forms or endings or engage in various other kinds of drill. But in so doing, are the students not practicing speech patterns in a psychological as well as a logical sense? The one element involved in this unreal controversy is an intellectual formulation; the other is a psychological phenomenon. Being on different planes, how can they collide? The adherents of formal grammar are mistaken only if they hold to the primitive assumption that students can be made to carry in their heads a complete set of language rules for conscious application when needed, as a mechanic might carry a set of socket wrenches, so that formal grammar becomes a goal for the course.

The suggestions to be made here concerning the teaching of grammar pertain to a course having as its objective the maximum attainable degree of active mastery, with emphasis on oral-aural ability. Such an objective is selected with a view to the public interest and presumes either the student spontaneously interested in such mastery or the neutral average student,

whose interest is either not yet aroused or is unspecialized. The presumption of course does not fit all cases. Conceivably the situation may be different for different languages, and certainly not all students have the same reasons for pursuing a foreign language. Some may want and need only a reading ability, and in their case an oral objective would lack motivation and would be altogether out of place. However, for our present purpose we may ignore these differences and consider the oral-aural objective as given.

In the typical case we are assuming, formal grammar takes on greater importance than it would if reading were our goal. But one should not immediately begin with abstraction. One must begin at a point determined by the present abilities of the average or under-average student. By "average" is here meant the rather sorry average now found in most public institutions of learning. As this average or under-average student comes to us, he is far from seeing language as a separate entity on which attention may be concentrated; much less can he comprehend abstractions subsidiary to this initial abstraction. For empirically, thought and language are inseparable. One thinks and speaks simultaneously; all thought is at least subvocalized. Insofar as the naive student may make any distinction at all, language will appear as simply the motor aspect of the complex.

In view of this fact, we do well not to anticipate any ability on the part of average students to assimilate generalizations concerning a foreign language the very reality of which is not yet fully felt. The best point of contact is vocabulary, for all students can already abstract to the extent of realizing the possible separate existence of words. One next uses these words in reading and very simple oral exercises such as question-and-answer work. One establishes patterns before talking about them. Then one examines these patterns with the students, pointing out the structures *A is B*, *A performs action on B*, *A gives, says, or shows B to C*, and so on. Here diagraming at the board is a valuable device, since it expresses structure visually. Then one further refines the sense of structure, i.e. increases the degree of abstraction, going on step by step to parts of speech

and specific syntactical relationships and their expression. Only then, after perfect abstraction has been attained, can the sentences the students learn become germinal. One common weakness is to begin too abstractly; another is to begin concretely but arrive at abstraction too soon; still a third, paradoxically, is not to become abstract enough.

Thus one must develop an understanding of the basic grammatical terminology. These terms are the very tools without which a student cannot hope to acquire the language at the unnaturally accelerated rate which the situation demands. Every trade has its *termini technici*, and so must ours. Only by means of them can we help the students to bring order out of chaos. We certainly cannot emulate those misguided teachers of English who avoid technical terms as if they were ashamed of of them, who each year flood our colleges and universities with freshmen whose English—their native language!—is puerile, uncouth, or semi-illiterate.

One should by no means neglect the systematic teaching of conjugations and other paradigms; likewise all possible generalizations such as rules and lists should be insisted on. One often sees in books on language teaching such as Kaulfers' *Modern Languages for Modern Schools* and *Foreign Languages and Cultures in American Education*, or in articles in pedagogical journals, accounts of classes eagerly learning to read or speak a foreign language and absorbing grammatical knowledge piecemeal as they became aware of the need for it and spontaneously demanded it. Here is one ready use for a grain of salt. A class which is enjoying its work will be receptive to such piecemeal instruction and may even call for it spontaneously; however, this piecemeal grammatical knowledge must at some time be gathered together in a systematic manner and put in the spotlight of instruction. Else the students' initial enthusiasm, which such writers are apt to exaggerate anyhow, will give way to ever greater confusion and frustration as the chaos of unconnected facts gets larger and larger.

This much is true: the students should be familiarized with a given grammatical phenomenon and operate in terms of it for a period

of time preceding and leading up to its systematic presentation and thorough learning. The systematic presentation should not come first, but it should come.

This incidentally poses a problem in the choice of textbooks. Of late there have appeared textbooks full of material for reading and oral practice but very short of systematic grammar and exercises. Sometimes all the grammar, such as it is, is hidden in the appendix as a sort of atrophied remnant, much as modern automobiles still embody disappearing remnants of horse-drawn carriages such as atrophied running-boards. On the other hand, older textbooks err in the opposite direction. A book embodying the golden mean is hard to find. It is typical enough of pedagogical theory and materials based on it thus to seesaw crazily from one extreme to the other.

But after all due emphasis has been placed on systematic or formal grammar, one must remember that these rigid molds must finally be broken so that their contents may flow together in true language ability, functional grammar. One cannot stop with formal grammar. Otherwise one will have produced students who cannot see the forest for the trees. They will know about passive voice, adjective declension, subjunctive mood, pronoun declension and position, rules of word order, and so on; but they will have these things in their minds as tight compartments. One may also say that such students have mastered the separate forms but have not mastered the form of forms, the language as a whole.

To accomplish this transition, exercises should be graduated from rigid stereotypes such as memoriter recitation of declensions toward ever-freer forms. Multiple-choice exercises are a freer and more life-like exercise than the memorization of paradigms; fill-in exercises embody still greater freedom; sentence translation into the foreign language still more.

In our German program at the University of Nebraska we utilize the sound laboratory in part for grammatical ends. The students

repeat recorded dialogues in the laboratory until they have memorized the sentences and can chant them if they hear only the English translations. Each Friday they must pass a written examination in which only the English is presented to them, and they are required to reproduce the German verbatim as it was in the recording. The sentences are kept colloquial and natural in vocabulary and style, and the entire dialogue keeps a consistent plot line. Within this framework we unobtrusively include a maximum number of sentences which illustrate grammatical points with which we mean to familiarize the students. Each Friday all class work centers around the dialogue of the week. It is taken for pronunciation practice and is reenacted by the students from memory. Then it is varied along grammatical lines on the motivation that each sentence memorized thus becomes infinitely germinal. The students are required to form German sentences based on the models they have memorized, in such a way that the vocabulary content is changed but the grammatical structure retained. Thus, for example, a sentence meaning "I have to go now" becomes "He has to stay here," "The man had to sell his house," "They had to wait for me," and so on. In this way the laboratory is a direct bridge to functional mastery of grammar, as well as serving its other oral-aural purposes.

The ultimate stage in the transition to greater freedom is free composition and free conversation. When the student has successfully accomplished these, he no longer thinks primarily of case, tense, and other technicalities; he does not have to, because he has learned them. He now thinks primarily in terms of the ideas he wants to convey. Thus the elements of thought and expression, whose artificial separation made accelerated language learning possible, are finally rejoined in their true unity. The extent to which this happens is the measure of the success of the oral-aural course.

JOHN WINKELMAN

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Language isn't all meaning; it is often largely a feeling.

* * *

—CALVIN T. RYAN

Teaching Children in a College French Class

IN ALL of the material written or things said about the teaching of foreign languages in the elementary grades, writers and speakers have repeatedly said or implied that the instruction of children in languages: French, Spanish, German, or any other, should always be done in short daily periods not to exceed 25 or 30 minutes. Further, it has usually been said that children are to be taught only to speak and understand the language and that there are not to be written materials placed before the students. There is to be no textbook for them. Spelling of words is not to be undertaken, and speaking is to be more or less of the same type as is used with small children who are learning English before they have learned to read and write. Pronunciation is to be learned by hearing an adult speaker and imitating him. Emphasis is to be on actual pronunciation of words, and speech patterns are to be set by having the children hear correct pronunciation and intonation. Much ensemble pronunciation, singing, and game playing in the language are to be engaged in in order to aid pronunciation, to break monotony and to give variety. A general good time is to be had by all—which condition is conducive to good learning. With this I have no argument. It is assumed that children are to be shown the meaning of words, preferably by illustration or context, and if not by these, by translation, thereby to enable them to grasp the meaning of what they are saying. There are some simple textbooks written for the purpose of being used by the various grade children, with emphasis on speaking or reading. These have been largely disregarded as not the best means of instructing children.

I am not saying that what I did is the best means of teaching foreign languages to children, but it is only a report of what was done, what was accomplished, and what I observed from it.

Although many of us would like to give our children instruction in foreign languages while they are young, we usually neglect it at home although we are capable of doing it—at least

we live by that assumption. Life with its devious activities has a way of interrupting us when we have once begun a program of study for our children. They may lose interest—maybe because we have lost interest—and other things crowd in to prevent our ever sticking to the proposition of carrying through their instruction to a happy and satisfying conclusion.

An excellent occasion presented itself to me this past summer to help my children learn French under conditions which cannot be said to be ideal, but under conditions which were at least satisfactory, and which were available. Our college summer school classes in foreign languages, like those in most colleges, are small. The past summer I had 6 enrolled in first year French and 11 in second year French. The idea came to me as a result of their own request to put our two daughters, Anne and Susan, ages 12 and 10, into the beginning French class and let them listen and pick up as much as they could. I recognized before I started that there were many real difficulties in this which would at least impede their progress. Children of those ages cannot understand the grammatical terminology in which college textbooks are written. Can college students always do so either? I did not expect the children to understand it all. I did not try too hard to make them understand it. Rather, I did the best I could, not to let them worry over this fact. Some things, however, they were able to understand without difficulty. Vocabulary was a relatively easy item to master, but I attempted to make them familiarize themselves only with those words which would likely be used in conversation, and with idioms of the same type.

They attended class regularly each morning for about 12 weeks. Periods were two 50 minute sessions with a 5 minute break between. This is 100 minutes per day. They took all tests which were given to the regular students and under the same conditions with no concessions in time or otherwise being given to them. They participated to a limited extent in class recitations.

I usually called on them only when I was relatively sure that they knew the answers, because I did not wish to delay the class by the children's halting efforts to put an answer together, as I probably often did in dealing with regular students. I did not wish the class to feel that they were being slowed up by the presence of the children. They didn't. Rather since the children answered only simple and routine questions the students were at times unduly impressed by these occasional performances. In the matter of explanation of grammatical points, I did not talk down to the students in view of the presence of the children. It has always been an aim in teaching to attempt to make explanations as simple as possible, and it is usually necessary to do so if one would be understood. Maybe our students would understand grammar better if we attempted to make explanations which children *could* understand. Did not someone recently say that too often textbooks are written by Ph.D's to be understood by Ph.D's rather than by 18 year old freshmen?

As to study outside of class, I make an effort to have the children study some each day without letting it become a difficult chore. To have expected them to study without help from me, considering the book from which their studying was to be done, would have been too much. Thus, for about an hour each night I became a tutor who directed their work, pronounced vocabulary, and asked questions. Much of their study consisted of pronouncing and writing vocabularies and verb tenses, answering questions and doing some of the more simple exercises. Since the girls were not able to keep up with the class from a grammatical standpoint, they soon reached the point where they felt discouraged when they attempted to understand the grammar or do the exercises. We worked on whatever was within the range of their comprehension and learning.

As a result of some previous lessons in French our children were able to make rather good progress in pronunciation. To tell the truth they both had possibly a better pronunciation at the end of the summer than the poorest passing students would have had. I attribute this to their youth, their greater interest in conversational forms and to some previous training. I

did not make any particular effort to make them learn the various precise manners of French sound production as described in the first pages of most textbooks.

Just as most students soon find a groove into which a majority of their grades fall, so did the two girls. I could usually be sure that the 12 year old would make about 60% on the tests which I gave, whether they were short daily oral tests or full period mimeographed tests. Thus, when her grades were averaged at the end of the first summer term she had made 61% on the basis of 70% as passing. Let no one think that since she came as close as she did to 70% that she almost passed, because she did not. Those 9 points which she lacked would have been as difficult for her to get as were the 61 she did get. She did not develop a sense of tense detection either as regards knowing the translation of French verb tense into the proper English form or in putting down the French for the English verb form. Things like person, number and tense were not well mastered. She could say what she wished if she had learned it, but she might mistake singular for plural or present for future etc. Translating a continuous passage from French to English was rather well done if she remembered the context, but detached French sentences gave her more trouble, particularly if there were no recognizable clue to their meaning. In translation of English to French she knew her vocabulary rather well, but was not able to be sure of adjective agreement, word position and items in which grammar differed from English. Her spelling bothered her, but she came very close when she was familiar with the pronunciation of a word. She knew enough about grammar to want to know "why" in relation to grammatical differences between French and English. This was a sign of intellectual curiosity which we wish to instill in all students. At the end of the summer her term average had dropped slightly to about 58% as was expected.

The ten year old soon after the term started found her groove at about 40% and held it almost constantly. Her first term average was 41% and her second 39%. Her final exam was 40%. She followed the same general lines of accomplishment as her older sister but usually did about $\frac{1}{2}$ less on all phases. She did her best

work on oral answers in class and in written answers to oral questions on tests. However, as expected, her spelling was not too good, yet when she knew something she came close to correctness. I had tried to have her spell by sound in so far as possible. She felt bound to no rules particularly for pluralization or verbal usage. She could recognize the meaning of a verb form in English, and she could not distinguish tenses. She had a knack of using her head which I would like to transfer to some of my college students when memory fails.

A continuous translation passage likewise gave her no particular trouble when the context was familiar. Detached sentences were for her also a source of trouble in that knowledge of context seemed necessary to set her spring of memory into action. She did little with English sentences to be put into French other than give the articles, pronouns, and small words. She remembered some vocabulary, but could not get her spellings correct. She could not distinguish tense forms, or person and number of verbs.

No doubt you may think that the continuous time spent by children of that age on such material was too great. 100 minutes is not easy on college students, but I noticed that the children kept their minds fairly well on what they were doing, probably not as well as the other students, but acceptably well. Nor do I believe that parental discipline or fear of reprisal was any factor at all in the matter. Rarely did I feel it desirable to speak to one of them in class or after about not paying attention. Thus, attention of children can be kept without noticeable frustration. They did not seem restless either. They were anxious to do what they did and they enjoyed it. It would be an exaggeration to say that they paid 100% attention or that they would have chosen to attend class rather than swim or play, yet they knew that they would profit by spending two hours per day like this and they were happy doing it.

Now what did I learn from all this? First, the ten year old was too young to profit particularly other than from pronunciation and oral work done in class. She has retained some of the material learned, however. I might have her repeat the same course next summer using

another book, so as not to let repetition cause monotony. I do not think that even with a year more of age, she could by next summer at the age of 11 learn enough to pass the course acceptably, but she would come about as close as the 12 year old did this summer. Actually, I believe that it was a mistake to start her in such a class so young, although I do not believe that any harm was done her. Rather I believe she has a good foundation for later study. I believe it would have been better to wait a few years before trying her in such a class.

As for the 12 year old who is now in the eighth grade, I am confident that if she repeats the same course next summer she will do well enough to get a passing grade. However, I do not believe that she will do enough at the age of 13 to make what we call a good grade. Granting that she repeats next summer, this will be just before she enters the ninth grade. We hope that in this grade she will have Elementary Latin. If this plan now started is continued, she would take Latin for the first time after she has repeated her first year of French. Thus, she would take her second year of French for the first time after she has had her first year of Latin in the winter term of her 9th grade, and would repeat her second year French the summer after she has had her second year of Latin, just before she entered the eleventh grade. Thus, she would have the equivalent of 12 semester hours of French or 4 high school units as she entered the eleventh grade. What I think might be better would be to have started her one year later and to allow her in the 4 summers preceding the 9th, 10th, 11th, and 12th grades to get her French. This would entail the repetition of each course. In this way she would have her first year of Latin the winter after her first summer of French and would complete her first year of French the next summer. Then she would begin her second year of French the summer after she had completed second year Latin and repeated her second year of French the summer before she entered the twelfth grade. The program could be moved forward another year and let her have her Latin in the ninth grade and her first exposure to French the following summer, then her second year Latin before her second exposure to first year French. This would require that her second exposure to

second year French be the summer after her high school graduation when she would normally be capable of doing full college work anyway. I would prefer letting her finish her French just before her senior year in high school. The interspersing of Latin and French would be positively advantageous in both languages as there are so many cognate vocabulary words and so much similarity of tense forms, etc. If anyone thinks that repetition of a course would be monotonous, I would be inclined to disagree since students won't get it all the first time anyway, and language study and mastery are based on repetition. This possibility can be removed if a different textbook is used when the course is taken the second time. However, this textbook change is not necessary and maybe not even desirable.

You may wonder, "Why try her on a course which she will have to repeat?" Why not let her wait until the two summers previous to her high school graduation and take each course only once? This might work, but I doubt it, except for very gifted students. In repeating these courses we would be giving work on a high school level, while if students took the courses only once they would be working on a college level while still in high school—a job which few students should attempt.

What are the implications of all this to us? Many of us live in small cities with high schools which do not offer an adequate program of foreign language study. At most, the ordinary high school offers only two years in any foreign language and it is not always continuous. Mine is a plan to give students in such localities the equivalent of 4 high school units in a foreign language by the time they enter the twelfth grade. There are people in every town, particularly where there is a college, who were educated in the liberal arts tradition who would like to give their children the advantage of a foreign language background which is not supplied in high school and which is often crowded out in college. Here it seems to be is a chance for college language teachers to render a service to the cause of language teaching, to the willing students in the community and incidentally to themselves.

If such courses are offered in a college town people who want their children to learn a lan-

guage in the summer could pay the regular tuition fee for summer school enrollment as special students. Since this whole system of repeating each course would be understood by all concerned, parents, children and regular students alike, it would not be expected that special attention would be given to the youngsters or that the college class would be geared to their speed. The class would move along as rapidly as college classes do and the high schoolers would keep up as best they would, yet be told not to be discouraged when the material seemed to be above their ability to grasp or retain. This would be one method of giving the high school children a chance to learn a foreign language which so many of them will lack. Needless to say this type of course would be given on the "middle of the road approach," but with some leanings towards oral-aural emphasis. Should one not be in a position to enroll college students, may it not be found that there would be in a community about a dozen high school students 12-14 years of age who would be interested in such a program? Granting that there would be no college students involved, one might use something of a modified language house, workshop, or day-camp idea in which conversation could be emphasized. My insistence on use of a textbook is to establish a standard of performance which could be used to give advanced standing to the students who later would take regular college courses.

Entrance into the mixed type of class such as I had would be for what might be known as the exceptional child in that he would usually be taken from the type of family which already provided him with some extra advantages but which wanted him to have more. Children of low mental ability or those whose background would be what might be called sub-standard would not likely be interested in this. Thus, only potentially good students would try it.

Another problem for the future would be that of credit. Colleges would not give credit for work done before high school graduation. This is as it should be. However, any student can get advanced standing on the basis of work previously done either by entrance or placement examinations. However, parents who want their children to know a language will be having them do it for its own sake and should not

be worried about future credit. If more of our students could come to our colleges with the equivalent of 4 units or 12 semester hours upon college entrance and then take the usual 2 years requirement, we could turn out students well grounded in the language.

Probably the most satisfying thing to come out of the class was a remark of our 12 year old when she suggested she enter the class. Her seventh grade teacher had been planning a trip to Europe for the summer. Never having studied French, she had been asking Anne for some of the most elementary French conversational expressions with their pronunciation. So

Anne said, "I want to learn some French so that if I should be a teacher, and had a chance to travel I would already know it."

Another satisfying thing to come out of my summer with the girls was a remark which our ten year old made on the second day of school this fall: "One thing I learned in French this summer is that if you don't study every day you don't learn." How many of us know some college students who have not yet learned this fact?

J. ROY PRINCE

Carson-Newman College

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The fundamental purpose or objective of language teaching is to *achieve an understanding, as complete as possible, between people of different linguistic backgrounds*. . . . This approach to language teaching uses the "oral approach" primarily in the *first stage* of language learning and does *not reject* reading and writing in *any stage* of language learning. . . . To deal with the culture and life of a people is *not just an adjunct* of a practical language course, something alien and apart from its main purpose, to be added or not as time and convenience may allow, but an *essential feature of every stage of language learning*. . . .

—CHARLES C. FRIES

* * *

The deeper we penetrate into the foreign language, the more we discover the little differences—at first covered under the great agreement in essentials—differences of style in the different authors one reads, shades of difference in the pronunciation of the different people one hears speak—just such as we are familiar with in our own language where differences are detected at once. "Every bird," says the proverb, "has its own song," but the proverb is meant mainly to apply to the difference between particular kinds of birds—the nightingale's rhapsody is not like the caw of the crow or the lark's trill. The proverb takes no account of the further fact that one nightingale's warblings give a different melody from those of another, and that every sparrow of a surety knows his nearest friends by their voices just as we know ours.

—OTTO JESPERSEN

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Modern Languages and General Education

TODAY air travel is making the geographical distances between nations seem insignificant and therefore putting all of us in somewhat the same position that the Dutch, for instance, have occupied for many years: every man on the street comes into frequent contact with "neighbors" from many different countries. Furthermore, our democratic way of life is being sorely tried and threatened by international misunderstandings. Only through understanding of the cultural heritage of our neighbors among the nations can we hope to preserve the ideals upon which our civilization rests, and such understanding can well be transmitted through the medium of language.

Never has the need for modern language training been greater than at present, and just at present the study of modern languages is being eclipsed by a new trend in education, by the rapidly increasing acceptance of the "core curriculum." If modern languages are not to suffer the fate of the ancient languages and gradually be dropped from high school and to an alarming extent even from the university curriculum, a place must be sought for them in the general education program.

Even the most enthusiastic of the pioneers in general education tend to overlook languages, feeling that the only way to master a language is to study grammar and memorize vocabulary, a process difficult to glamorize. For the student who has the aptitude and the desire to specialize in the language they are right. However, it behooves us in the teaching profession to seek a way to share the appreciation of foreign civilizations with the other students as well. Let us take advantage of general education rather than try to resist the advent of something which is already here.

The proponents of general education advocate the transcending of departmentalization in order to give students a wider perspective. Through "core" courses they offer all students a common body of knowledge which will serve the various groups among them as a basis for

communication and understanding. Through exclusive emphasis upon specialization society has been gradually breaking down into clearly circumscribed specialist *cliques*. General education is a step towards drawing these groups together again. Instead of assuming a role of leadership in the process, we language teachers have been suspicious of the movement lest the wider scope of interest endanger the specialized goals we have set for ourselves in the past. If we join forces with our colleagues in the social and natural sciences, art, music and drama and attempt to give our students some insight into language as the expression of a way of life, our students will perhaps not be able to handle translations of involved English sentences into even more involved constructions in the foreign language as well as they would, had we devoted our efforts exclusively to an analysis of grammar. However, we shall have more students to share in the benefits of the course, and who is to maintain that a sympathetic understanding of a foreign people will not better help us to realize the aims of a liberal education than the short-lived ability to conjugate irregular foreign verbs?

For the few who wish and can profit by specialized work in languages a tutorial section should certainly be available in which the acquisition of vocabulary, both active and passive, and the study of the structure of the language are stressed. However, for the great body of students who have no special linguistic aptitude, I should like to propose a course which would transmit some insight into the language as an expression of the inherent nature of the people who speak it. I shall use German as an example, but obviously something similar could be undertaken with any of the European languages.

Such a course might well begin with a brief survey of the place of German in the family of Indo-European languages. The teacher could, by showing it to be the sister language of English, make the student alert to the similarities

between it and his own mother tongue. Adopting a psychosemantic approach to the subject, the teacher can use references to philology and historical grammar to give his students an insight into the similarity in the way in which German and English speaking peoples of the earth think. Kaulfers, in his *Modern Languages for Modern Schools*, emphasizes the fact that "the basic thought processes that originally molded the syntactical patterns of the language are revealed in such phenomena as the double negative in certain languages such as Spanish, the position of adjectives, the subjunctive mood, the distinction between the imperfect and the preterite tenses and the like."¹ Frenchmen and Spaniards, he says for example, tend to see the whole before the part and therefore speak of a "table square," while Germans and Englishmen proceed from the part to the whole, there saying "square table." Such characteristics of the language which reflect a people's reaction to environment, as well as concise explanations of the origin of such features of German as gender or the script, should be interesting and thought-provoking to the students.

Since it is advisable to proceed from the known to the unknown, an introduction to the pronunciation of the foreign language might well be based upon words with obvious English cognates. In German a group of words could be used which are orthographically identical in English. Examples are: Winter, Rose, Butter, Ball, Finger, Stein.

The second unit of the course might offer the students some opportunities to utilize what they have learned about pronunciation through the singing of songs and the reciting of poems. Again I should stress the comparison with their own language. English versions of many German songs, both folk songs like the *Lorelei* and popular hit songs like *Lili Marlene*, will already be familiar to the students. Extensive use of phonograph records can be made in connection with this unit.

In the course of the unit students could select topics relating to Germany's brilliant achievements in the field of music and make reports to the class about the works of, for instance, Bach, Händel, Mozart, Beethoven, Schubert or Wagner. In cooperation with the music department a student concert might be arranged, fea-

turing the works of one or more of the German composers. Since Wagner was a renowned poet as well as a musician, some students would perhaps be interested in comparing the German librettos of his familiar operas with the English versions.

Goethe, we remember, could not participate in Germany's hatred of the rival French nation, for he could not hate any land with so rich a cultural heritage as that of France. When he was still a small boy the French occupation of his home city of Frankfurt brought him into contact with the masterpieces of the French classical theater. At that time he took advantage of every opportunity to master the French language, even writing copious verses in that tongue, and his admiration for the literature and art of France never abated.

Something of what contact with the literature of another people did for Goethe it can also do for our young people if we help them take advantage of the wealth of opportunities available today. To be sure, Goethe was a genius, and the "average" high school or college student could not teach himself a foreign language by listening to plays or writing poems, but he could acquire a love for the masterpieces of literature by comparing the originals with good English translations and by hearing records of great actors' or singers' presentations of parts of them.

A few years ago students who had recourse to "trotts" were looked upon as dishonest and penalized for their "cheating" when detected. Careful use of a good translation can, however, be a very salutary experience. I recall during my senior year in high school being permitted by the teacher to do some independent reading in Ovid and Horace with the help of a translation, while the others in the class had prose composition. Those hours spent on the Latin poets and their English translations were certainly the most stimulating aspect of my Latin course.

Excellent recordings of Wagnerian operas are available, which would afford the students an opportunity to hear as well as see the German text. Moreover, if educators take full advantage

¹ Walter V. Kaulfers, *Modern Languages for Modern Schools*, New York: McGraw-Hill Book Co., 1942.

of the educational possibilities of television and claim time for school and university sponsored programs, it should be possible to have at least parts of Wagner's operas presented for the students.

This second unit dealing with German music could be concluded shortly before Christmas with the learning of some of the familiar carols in German. Nearly all students already know "Silent Night," "O Come, All Ye Faithful" and "Lo How a Rose e'er Blooming." Learning them in German would therefore not be tantamount to memorizing so many nonsense syllables. The text would be meaningful, and immediate use could be made of the ability acquired.

A short third unit dealing with German foods could be completed in perhaps the two weeks preceding the Christmas vacation. The class could make use of resource visitors here. Members of the community could be drawn into the activities of the school: German relatives and friends could be asked to meet with the class to answer questions on the menus and recipes characteristic of different parts of Germany. A new appreciation of students and adults of foreign extraction would no doubt be gained through such friendly gatherings. An optional class excursion to a German restaurant could supplement class work, and the help of the home economics department might well be solicited in preparing a German meal. Girls in the class could bake at home some of the delicious Christmas cookies for which German housewives are so famous. The skills gained in this unit could be combined with those of the preceding one in an evening of carolling in German followed by an "open house," at which the class could serve coffee and Christmas cookies to their friends and members of the community with a German background.

As a fourth unit, one to be begun immediately after the Christmas holidays, the students could make a study of German influences on American culture. Individual students might choose as study projects the lives of various German-Americans who have been influential in the development of our country. A few suggestions are: Waldseemüller, who first suggested the name America, Minnewit, who struck one of the best bargains in history when he bought

Manhattan from the Indians, Pastorius, who would be of special interest to students who have had some association with Philadelphia, Zenger, who would appeal especially to any prospective journalists in the group, and the printer Sauer. There are short biographies of Steuben, Sutter and Carl Schurz available in simple German with generous footnote translations and an adequate vocabulary, so that interested students should be able to handle them, especially with some individual help from the instructor. An American history teacher would undoubtedly be willing to talk to the students about the rôle played in the Revolution on the American side by the German colonists and on the British by the Hessians, nearly half of whom remained in this country after the war.

In connection with this unit a field trip to the Pennsylvania Dutch country might be undertaken by schools whose distance from Eastern Pennsylvania is not prohibitive. The students would have an opportunity to observe the traditional dress and the picturesque carriages of the Amish as well as the folk art with its symbolism, to taste Pennsylvania Dutch cooking at the famous restaurants and outdoor markets, to visit the clean, efficient Amish and Mennonite farms in the lush country of Lancaster County and to hear the dialect spoken there. In the January issue of the *Modern Language Journal* Professor Koenig of Colgate describes a successful trip which coincided with the Bach Festival in Bethlehem.

The students would probably enjoy reading some Pennsylvania Dutch columns clipped from the newspapers and perhaps singing some of the familiar songs in that language, such as *Home on the Range: Daheim auf der alt Bauerei*. If there is a group of Pennsylvania Dutch in the vicinity there may be a celebration on Ground Hog Day in which interested members of the class could participate.

Students who enjoy acting could present a play, such as *Papa Is All*, reading their parts.

Most young people show a natural interest in the ways of life of other peoples. Therefore I suggest as the next unit a comparison of life in Germany with our life here in the United States. Topics for special study might include: 1) family and school life; 2) social customs; 3)

climate; 4) political organization; 5) labor relations; 6) religion; 7) movies, radio and the theater; 8) art and architecture. There would of necessity be considerable collaboration with teachers and students in other fields, particularly the social sciences, and slides and film strips and an opaque projector could be used to advantage to show the paintings and architectural monuments, as well as the type of scenery and construction characteristic of the various sections of Germany.² Again residents of foreign extraction could supply interesting personal sidelights, particularly in regard to customs and family life.

Since Germany has made such a unique contribution to the world of science, and since the majority of the students who elect German in preference to other languages are generally prospective scientists, German Scientists would be an appropriate subject for the concluding unit of work. The achievements of such men as Humboldt, Helmholtz, Röntgen, Hertz, as well as the work of the I. G. Farbenindustrie, the present-day research in synthetic gasoline or synthetic rubber or in jet propulsion, should be reported on not only by members of the class but by the science faculty or visiting lecturers from local industry. Realizing the indispensability of German to the scientist should provide motivation for subsequent serious study of the language. Students particularly interested in a certain science, such as chemistry, can be supplied with lists of German words most essential to the vocabulary of that science. This is surely functional material for vocabulary acquisition.

While general education has been defined in a multiplicity of ways, the consensus calls it a reaction against overspecialization and the fragmentation of the curriculum. Programs in general education attempt to restore "relevance and coherence to the students' educational experience."³ Such a course as the one outlined above would avoid emphasis upon the technicalities of a language, devoid of significance for most students. By breaking down subject matter barriers and enlisting the collaboration of colleagues in music, art, home economics,

history and the natural and social sciences, as well as representatives of the community and its industry, its instructor should enable the student to integrate the contents of the course with the educational experience as a whole. Thus language would be restored to its rightful place in the humanities, as it was originally conceived in the Renaissance. General education is also "opposed to the aristocratic view that liberal education should be either the special privilege of a leisure class, the exclusive possession of an intellectually élite, or the distinguishing hallmark of those who practice certain professions instead of engaging in occupations which carry lesser social prestige."⁴ The chief aim of the type of course suggested is to offer the cultural benefits of foreign language study to the large percentage of the school population not able, because of financial or intellectual limitations, or other interests, to contemplate professional work in the language itself. The most valid criticism leveled at language teachers by the generalists is that we take advantage of the prevalent college requirement in foreign language to force upon students material beyond the capacity and remote from the interests and daily life situations of the vast majority.⁵ The declining enrollments in modern languages force us to take this criticism seriously and to seek means, such as the one suggested above, for adapting our courses to the needs of a democratic society. In such a society, where schooling is compulsory for all, educators have the implicit responsibility for making it meaningful for all.

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² Filmstrips can be rented for about \$3.50, or slides can be purchased for about \$.50. They are available featuring Dürer, Luther, the Renaissance artists, peasant customs and art, German architecture, painting and plastic art, the various cities, life in different sections of the country or in certain historical periods.

³ "General Education," *Fifty-first Yearbook of the National Society for the Study of Education*. (1952), pp. 2, 6.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 12.

⁵ Cf. Spaulding, F. T., "The Generalist's Case against Modern Languages," *French Review*, VII, pp. 125 ff.

Notes and News

The Foreign Language Houses at the University of Washington

The necessity of a trip abroad as a part of the training for modern foreign language teachers has been constantly emphasized. This suggestion entails expenditure beyond the means of most modern language teachers who simply cannot afford to study or travel abroad after paying the expenses of a college education. The majority of them are usually compelled to postpone their trip until some time in the distant future when they have saved from slender salaries sufficient money to realize this golden dream.

In the Northwest, where the percentage of teachers who travel or study abroad is low, the foreign language houses, *La Maison Française* and *La Casa Hispana*, organized during the summer by the University of Washington, provide the best possible substitute for study in foreign countries. They offer further disciplined training, especially designed to meet the needs of foreign language teachers and students, in coordination with the usual summer courses given by regular members of the faculty. Both houses accept students who have had at least one year of previous language study and who agree to speak only the language of the House to other members of the group. With such a minimum requirement students of diverse backgrounds are admitted who fit into one of the three groups into which each house is divided: the beginning, the intermediate, or the advanced group.

The training given by the houses is directed towards the mastery of the spoken and written language and an understanding and appreciation of the culture of the country studied. The staff try to improve the ability of the students to pronounce, to understand and to use the language orally; they seek to make the students realize the importance of habits of correct articulation and clear enunciation and strive to further the development of speed in silent reading to a point approximating the mother tongue. The students increase their knowledge of the history, institutions, customs, literature, fine arts, and life in general of the country whose language they are studying, so that ultimately they achieve a better understanding of its contribution to modern civilization. There is nothing extravagant in the argument that serious study, properly guided, is capable of contributing directly and specifically to the development of literary appreciation.

During their stay the students read extensively. We consider that the kind and amount of the reading, as well as the information and comment provided by the directors and teachers, is an important factor in the attainment of our aims. As an illustration, last summer, the average number of pages read by the members of the Spanish House was as follows:

1st Term: 500 pp. of books, 60 pp. of magazines, and 20 newspaper articles. (one month)

2nd Term: 650 pp. of books, 80 pp. of magazines, and 30 newspaper articles. (one month)

An immediate objective that we pursue in the language houses is the development of an extensive vocabulary and idiomatic phrases for use in writing and speaking. Students are asked to carry a notebook, pocket-size, in which they write all new words and expressions recently learned, as well as English phrases which the students are unable to translate. During a personal interview, the director checks the notebook, corrects mistakes, and explains the uses of new words by supplying numerous examples utilizing these words.

The aforementioned objectives are pursued during the summer also through class instruction. Each course has three meetings weekly. In the less advanced section some time is spent on grammar, but the emphasis, even here, is on giving short talks in the foreign language on varied subjects, followed by a discussion period. The intensive study is supervised and coordinated with courses offered on the campus. Conversation at meals, at least two hours a day, is both instructive and enjoyable—we break away from the formality of the classroom.

The language laboratory of the University is widely used, particularly to improve aural comprehension, pronunciation, and intonation. We have about one hundred conversational tapes of significant literary prose works and poems, two hundred variety tapes, and eighty "Voice of America" programs sent by the State Department. Students spend at least two sessions a week in the laboratory following a definite fixed program, repeating the sounds and words on the tapes.

The language houses provide both educational and social opportunities. Several evenings a week there are House programs, which include talks and discussions, singing, an extensive use of films and slides, excursions and picnics. Some well-known professors from other colleges, as well as members of the Consular corps, give talks on literary, artistic, political and religious life. Recordings of popular and classical music, accompanied by explanations, provide many an evening's entertainment. Group singing of folk-songs from mimeographed sheets provides further enjoyment. Recent foreign films are shown every Tuesday evening in one of the University's large auditoriums. Enthusiastic travelers show their treasures of colored slides. As the Seattle summer is ideal for sports, the House residents also find time to engage in their favorite outdoor activities. In past years we have enjoyed swimming, horseback riding, tennis, volley-ball, hikes and boating. Banquets at Seattle's Spanish and French restaurants are also planned. In all these programs, permanent and visiting faculty members as well as foreign students and guests participate. At the

end of the session both Houses present plays—the students of the French House performed this year two one-act comedies, “L’Anglais tel qu’on le parle,” of Tristan Bernard and “L’Anniversaire” by Professor Jean-Charles Chessex of the University of Washington. The students of the Spanish House presented “Sin Querer” of Jacinto Benavente and “Tres Puntos de Vista,” a three-act comedy by Nicolas Alferieff, an advanced student of the *Casa Hispana*.

Accommodations for the language house residents are indispensable to the success of the program. The building must offer space for educational purposes, recreation and personal convenience. We strive to create a foreign atmosphere at all times. In some previous years, the University of Washington used the girls’ dormitories, but, this last year, unable to obtain adequate dormitory space, we enjoyed a successful program at the local YMCA near the University. In this building we had our own dining-room as well as ample class-room and recreational space. One large sitting-room was decorated with foreign posters and pictures, provided with realia of all kinds, French and Spanish newspapers, periodicals and learned journals, record-players and a plentiful supply of records. Students could use this room whenever they wished. We consider that this idea of a summer language House without dormitory space could easily be copied by many colleges and universities.

For participation in the programs of the language houses, the members receive up to four quarter credits in one language for a session of one month. In previous years four credits have been given for full participation in all programs, or two credits for dinners alone and programs or for lunches alone, programs and special assignments.

Even though our publicity has been fairly extensive through folders, advertisements in teaching journals, articles in newspapers and magazines, use of the radio and television, in addition to our publicity on the campus,

there is a definite need for encouragement on the part of college and school officials for residence or participation in language houses by their foreign language teachers and instructors. The teacher must realize that residence in a foreign language house is an excellent means of development of aural comprehension and oral expression as well as improvement of the teaching methods so necessary in the practice of his profession. With the new interest in the teaching of foreign languages in elementary schools this is especially true. The Houses can provide extraordinary help to the elementary school teacher in promoting successfully his new venture.

Students now, whether in universities or in schools, expect that their instructors speak the foreign language that they are teaching. They wish, moreover, to be able to speak that language themselves. The old method of pure translation is not popular. In many large cities, such as New York, Boston, Philadelphia and Cleveland, the oral command of a foreign language is required for appointment to a position of language teacher. There is no question that inability to speak the language he teaches is the most important single cause of poor results in the classroom. The fact that a large majority of language teachers in the United States have not traveled abroad, is a factor of importance in this connection. It also places on the college departments a heavy obligation to train prospective teachers more effectively to pronounce, to understand, and speak the foreign language, and among prospective and practicing teachers the responsibility of developing themselves along these lines. In lieu of actual study or travel abroad residence in a foreign language house can without question help to achieve the essential requirements in modern language training

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About Lingua-Games

Today, the interest of the educational psychologist centers around conditions under which learning takes place most easily and most rapidly. All psychological processes, of which learning a language is but one, at least in part, are dealt with as responses of organisms to stimulation.

Following the new concepts of modern psychology, the modern language teacher should, as a consequence, center his efforts around the creation of a class room atmosphere that is most favorable of and inductive to adopting a new language. He should furthermore call upon all available media at his command and within his reach to arouse the strongest possible responses in the group by stimulating the linguistic capacities of the human mind. No responses can be expected without sufficient stimulation.

To attain at least modest results in speaking a foreign language, two factors seem to be of paramount importance: 1. Interest and enthusiasm on part of the student; and 2. an adequate surrounding that induces the student to take up and continue his study. Such a pseudo-natural sur-

rounding includes the student's immediate environment and the instructor as well.

To this end we must at any price attempt to convert the class room into a “milieu” that is highly saturated with an atmosphere susceptible to learning a foreign tongue. No doubt, many teachers have already done a commendable job by decorating the room with colorful travel posters and pictures. But more must be done, and can be done! We have to look at language teaching from a “wholistic” point of view, taking language in its entirety, not just a segment of it like cultural background, translations, reading, or grammar. While we should definitely decide on one basic approach before we start teaching, it should be borne in mind that any method can gainfully be supplemented by a variety of aids.

But while our teachers have the desire to emphasize the spoken word during their lessons, they sometimes encounter difficulties in creating the proper stimuli and adequate setting for a lively conversation. After many controversies, we have now come to accept the importance of

the direct method of teaching foreign languages. We have come to realize, out of necessity, that we should stress the speaking and practical use of the language far more than we do, in order that the student may enjoy a more fluent command of the language under study. It is at this point that a short play or game can be of great assistance to the instructor, perhaps at the end of a lesson when the student's attention begins to lag and a general fatigue appears to be present in the class.

Such *Lingua-Games*, as the writer would like to name them for lack of a better term, may help the instructor to bridge the gap between "cut and dried" teaching of grammar and reading, and renewed creation of enthusiasm and interest so vitally necessary especially for foreign language teaching. The apparent apathy of the students is only one of many tell-tale indications that our teaching methods must continually be re-examined to determine a possible vacuum in need of stimuli.

Although games per se do not constitute a separate method of instruction, they can greatly assist both teachers and students in facilitating the process of learning. Realizing that the early years of childhood are the most fertile ones for acquiring and developing a second language, the *Lingua-Games* developed by this writer were primarily designed for the use with children. However, adult students may find them a pleasant and entertaining diversion that may prove very helpful on the road to a successful mastery of a foreign tongue.

The inventive and resourceful teacher will have little or no difficulty in making up such little games himself. Often they are found at the end of a lesson of conventional text books, but by far not as many as needed. It might be helpful here to point out a few principles that constitute the basis of *Lingua-Games*:

First of all, in what way can such games, or plays be of help in our daily teaching in the class room? The purpose of *Lingua-Games* may be manifold, and the following enumeration is by no means complete:

1. They are a vocabulary builder and should increase the student's word power;

2. They assist in memory training, with and without association;
3. They increase conversational fluency and ease;
4. They can be an aid to the teaching of irregular verbs;
5. They establish confidence in already acquired knowledge;
6. By repetition of previously learned material, they help to deepen and groove newly acquired knowledge into the student's mind.

Also, it might perhaps be useful to consider for a moment what our aims should be in playing *Lingua-Games* during regular class room instruction and what factors we must consider in creating these games:

Firstly, they should be "goal-directed," a term taken from the field of applied psychology, meaning that games should not be played merely "for the game's sake" alone, but must be directed towards a definite goal, previously determined by the instructor. Secondly, they should be simple in structure and easy to grasp, in order not to discourage students that are somewhat below the class average; and thirdly, *Lingua-Games* must provoke active and enthusiastic participation on the part of all members of the class, should their purpose as an effective supplementary teaching aid be accomplished.

But after all, the best way to test out and readily appreciate the pedagogical value and significance of *Lingua-Games* is to play them for yourself first, perhaps with some close friends or colleagues. Then, if you are truly having fun with them, go "full-steam" ahead and let the class share your experiences. If you are not convinced about their educational value, do not attempt to play them with others. It would be wasted time and effort on your part as well as the group's.

A condensed version of collected *Lingua-Games* has been published by the Service Bureau for Modern Language Teachers at the Kansas State Teachers College of Emporia and is available from the source by enclosing 5 cents for each copy to cover cost of mimeographing and postage.

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One Way to Subsidize a Native Assistant

University modern language departments would often be glad to bring more graduate students from abroad to serve as teaching assistants, or indeed as mature teachers of their own language, while acquiring a deeper knowledge of the United States, to enhance their teaching of English after they return home.

A main obstacle has been that the modern language department must use its few stipends to subsidize graduate study in its own field, while the foreign student rightly wants to study such things as English and American literature.

The Romance Department of the University of Washington has found one way to overcome this obstacle, with the help of the Department of English. A graduate student from France or Spanish America, recommended by the Institute of International Education, is selected jointly by the two departments, to come and teach his language five hours a week, as a half-time teaching assistant, devoting

the other half of this time to the study of our literature. An American graduate student in the Romance department is appointed by the Department of English to a teaching assistantship in English composition. To tell the truth, the American would probably prefer to teach the foreign language; but a year of teaching freshman English has been a revealing and a rewarding experience for the three who have done it under this plan. Foreign language teachers could, in fact, very usefully know more than we do about that sector of education, which is inseparable from our own.

The same cooperative arrangement might conceivably be worked out with other departments, for example History. A Romance graduate student acceptable for a teaching assistantship in History could profit immensely from the experience of a neighboring yet contrasting tradition of teaching.

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Don Quijote in Italian Opera

It is hard for the Hispanist to accept the fact that the two figures of his literature, in addition to Don Juan, that are best known outside of Spain—Don Quijote and the Cid—have not prospered in Italian opera. Nor have they held their place in the opera of any other nation (Spain included) with possibly the exception of Massenet's piece *Le Cid*. Although Don Juan has been forever glorified by Mozart as *Don Giovanni*, so far as it is possible to determine there does not exist a single full length opera in Italian which has to do with the Cid or with any episode in his career. There has been no lack of attempt, however, to put Don Quijote and other of Cervantes' creations on the stage, but each enterprise has been short-lived.

The theory which immediately presents itself as to why this is so is that Don Quijote is a philosophical work with few lyrical qualities and that opera is ill-disposed to treat the former and reluctant to omit the latter. This is true to a certain extent, but consider the undying popularity of Gounod's *Faust*, a philosophical work, admittedly a great simplification of its source in that it is merely one of many episodes of the vast original, but one which was carefully chosen to present a beautiful love affair. Here, then, lies the main reason why Don Quijote has not held the stage: both Italian *opera seria* and *opera buffa* demand that there be a couple in love. Can the reader recall any opera in which there is no plot or at least subplot of love? The public wants it, expects it, and demands it; without it an opera is doomed. Don Quijote not only has no love affair, except in his imagination, but his very nature, physical appearance, and mental status preclude both the possibility and plausibility of such action. It is true that subsidiary plots with love as their theme abound in the *Quijote*, and some of them appear singly as an opera; but in opera they are as completely detached from the central theme of Don Quijote and Sancho as they were in the novel. The same Massenet in his *Don Quichotte* (Monte Carlo, 1910) makes Dulcinea a courtesan and has the knight propose marriage to her twice before being rejected. Even so, the love interest is not sufficient.

Another reason why *Don Quijote* has failed in opera is that the public, who know so little of the true nature of Cervantes' novel, expect and, through simplified abridgments and hearsay are already supplied with, a comic interpretation, which on the stage can be no more than moderately funny. In *Don Quijote*, the comic and the serious, the smile and the tear, are so inseparably woven and bound fast together that to present either alone as an operatic presentation of the book is a meaningless sacrilege; and Don Quijote results as atypic. The novel has lived only because it is such a masterful contrast of the real with the ideal, and of the serious with the comic. Life itself is a contrast of these, hence the universality of Sancho and his master. Only those who have read completely and studied *Don*

Quijote as a work of art are aware that the novel is more than a comedy involving the amusing aberrations of a madcap. It is because Don Quijote's serious aspect is not well known that the sphere of world opera invariably has offered an exclusively comic Don Quijote. The general public has not been trained to conceive of him otherwise, even if it were possible, or desired, to capture the real spirit of the novel in several hours of opera. Therefore, because Quijote himself has no genuine love affair, because the opera-goer cannot conceive of him except as a ludicrous monstrosity, and because even when interpreted accurately his role of innocence and sageness is difficult of adaptation to opera, there is no great Don Quijote Italian opera.

This is not, however, through lack of experimentation. Annals teem with lists of ballets, operettas, and orchestral music treating the theme. In strictly grand opera with Italian libretto, Don Quijote has appeared periodically. The only method for positive verification of the references from varied sources affirming the existence of certain Italian Don Quijote operas of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries is for one to wend his way through the only reliable and at the same time complete and up-to-date "opera dictionary" by Loewenberg, who consulted only original sources in his monumental work. Then the results are discouraging. The only *Don Chisciotte* operas the existence of which is substantiated by Loewenberg are by Antonio Caldara (Vienna, 1727) and Francesco Conti (Vienna, 1719). Querol Gavalda lists additional ones by the following composers: Giovanni Paisiello (Naples, 1769); Angelo Tarchi (Paris, 1790); Alberto Mazzucato (Milan; 1830); C. Rispo (Naples, 1859). These may not appear in Loewenberg because of unavailability of the original librettos, but a better guess is that much of the confusion results from the often indistinct dividing line between operas and operettas. Querol Gavalda lists also an opera by Salieri (Vienna, 1771) based on "Las bodas de Camacho," and another by the versatile Donizetti (Rome, 1833) to do with "Las locuras de Cardenio." Haywood, in his compilation, adds another by Felice Lattuada, *La caverna di Salamanca* (Genoa, 1938), based on one of Cervantes' *Entremeses*. Besides episodes from Don Quijote, Cervantes' *Novelas ejemplares* and *Entremeses* are well represented in Italian lyrical drama, sometimes bordering on opera or operetta. Although the present scope has been limited to operas, and specifically to ones with Italian librettos, supplementary examination of the aforementioned dictionaries of opera reveals that Cervantes is equally represented in the French and German schools of opera. Yet be he French, German, or Italian, the operatic Don Quijote has not prospered.

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Impressions of Spain Today

I should like to share with you, most informally, some of my impressions of Spain today. Of travelling in Spain, I shall merely say that almost everywhere you go, you will find good roads, friendly people, fine accommodations. But I wish to speak especially about some aspects of the social, economic and political life of Spain.

Three things particularly impressed me in the social set-up in Spain today:

First, the steadily increasing middle class, a good sign in my opinion, a middle class fed both by the lower and the upper groups. The boarding house where I lived was a typical mixture of middle class people of various origins, from the owner of the pension, of aristocratic origin, to men and women boarders who had known life in the slums, and the two little old ladies who had lost all they had in the Civil War. "Las Jovencitas," they had nicknamed them, because, typically feminine, they had put down their respective ages as 40 and 45 on the registration blanks of the boarding house instead of 60 and 65. So, in the lower groups, parents, helped by the State, make sacrifices so their children can rise ("eso es el progreso," said a proud young fellow); and, from the upper groups, reconciled citizens, like the Jaime Febrer of *Los Muertos Mandan*, reach the conclusion that there is nothing dishonorable in good hard work. In Spain, as everywhere else, you have to adjust yourself to changing conditions, or disappear.

The second social factor of importance to me is the manifestation of social consciousness and responsibility, the manifestation of a social solidarity to create better living conditions for the underprivileged. This is particularly true of the younger generation and the women's section of the Falange is largely responsible for that. More than the men's section they seem to have kept up their social as well as national crusading spirit. The women's Falange has been responsible for a great deal of social legislation and social improvements. They are carrying on a most important adult education program among women. This is all the more needed that, although, theoretically, primary school education is compulsory, in practice it is not, for various reasons, one of which being that there are not enough schools. The top social leaders are trained in the historical setting of the Castillo de la Mota, near Medina del Campo; these, in turn will train others in regional schools. I was impressed by the personality and moral caliber of the young women in charge of training young people for social leadership. The women's Falange has organized rural education schools in various parts of Spain; they also send mobile units to remote parts of the country to educate women in hygiene, child care, cooking, sewing, first aid, etc.

Every woman in Spain between the age of 15 and 35 is subject to six months of social service: three months are months of training in all branches of home economics, child care, hygiene, first aid, religion and Spanish history; three months are months of actual social service of which are exempt women who support dependents. This social service has been a great levelling agent, and a large number of girls in the upper economic group choose to work with the Falange and its social program.

A third fact of social significance to me is connected with the Church and explains some of the characteristics of the Spanish clergy. I had often wondered why the Spanish clergy is so much more narrow-minded than the French or Italian clergy, for instance. A friend of mine explains it this way: in the first place, the great majority of the Spanish clergy comes from humble country homes. Country homes are the most conservative when it comes to changes in customs and manners. They have a more narrow-minded conception of what is right and wrong. And then, because members of the clergy come mostly from humble homes, they are segregated from early childhood, attending priests' schools. They get an excellent intellectual training in philosophy and the humanities; they often become excellent scholars, but they lack two things: an understanding of the scientific world and contacts with men of the world. That friend of mine remarked that if she ever had a son who wanted to be a priest, she would not oppose it, but she would insist on his completing the "bachillerato," so as to have an all-round intellectual training.

And now, the economic life of Spain. It remains as true today as ever that Spain is basically a poor country because of its basic geographical conditions. You still find terrifically poor regions, like Los Monegros, between Lérida and Zaragoza, a region so dry that wine is cheaper than water. But science can do something to remedy some unfavorable conditions. The two big problems of Spain, irrigation and erosion are being tackled scientifically and results are beginning to show. You see signs of improved national economic life in the impressive works carried out everywhere: canalization and irrigation, reforestation, electrification, road building, new Diesel engine trains, low-cost housing units, both in the country and in the city.

But so far as the individual is concerned, the problem of ways and means remains a basic one for all but the top economic groups. Salaries and wages have not kept pace with the increased cost of living. Life is cheap in Spain for tourists but not for Spanish people whose income is in pesetas. Only one item is cheap, even for the Spaniards: lodging. In a good section of Madrid, in a fine modern building with an automatic elevator that really works, you pay less than \$30 a month for an apartment that includes living-room, dining room, two bedrooms, a modern bathroom, a maid's room and toilet. But the same apartment furnished would cost four or five times more.

There are signs of improved economic life in the middle class: various articles of household equipment, such as electric refrigerators, for instance. A friend of mine in Madrid is a typical example of the attitude of the younger generation. Her husband is a young businessman; although they have a year-old child she keeps on teaching for a while so that they can have a nicer home. They live in one of those less than thirty dollars a month apartment. When they furnished it, they decided to use the livingroom as a dinette also, save on diningroom furniture and buy an electric refrigerator. Although an automobile so far has been the privilege of the rich, this young couple is beginning to see the possibility of getting one within a year or two, thanks

to an Italian firm which is establishing an assembly plant in Spain and specializes in small, low cost cars.

More has been done for more people within a few years than had been promised as possible within 15 or 20 years during the chaotic thirties. Perhaps this is why the moral scars of the Civil War are beginning to heal. And this brings me to the third aspect of Spanish life I wish to discuss: the political.

The old gentleman who owns the boarding house where I stayed lost his wife and his son, killed by the Communists. In the same *pensión* lived people who had relatives killed by the Nationalists. Fanaticism and blind hatred is being replaced by the understanding that a civil war is the most devastating kind, and that it makes innocent victims on both sides.

Spain today is a kingdom with a regent instead of a king. To our way of thinking it is a dictatorship; but, I frankly admit that I see very little difference between the present regime in Spain and the benevolent paternalism of the monarchy at various times of Spanish history, the benevolent paternalism whose philosophy was to do things for the people, but without the people. Spain has a constitution and a bill of rights. Both are respected as much as in other countries, but its constitution is based on the principle of authority and a very strong executive power. The people are represented at the Cortes, but they are represented as citizens and as members of professional guilds, not as members of political parties, since all political parties are outlawed except "*el movimiento nacional*," and not the Falange, as is usually believed. If I am not mistaken, only two members of the present government are falangistas. Franco surrounds himself with technicians, not politicians, and that is why so much has been done for the material development of the country. Most of the opposition to Franco is in the Basque country and in Cataluña, the more prosperous parts of Spain where wages could be raised, whereas they could not in other parts.

Regardless of their personal political leaning, people

seem to agree on the fact that, by 1935, the Popular Front was in the hands of Communists and that the Russian ambassador was the real boss in Madrid. That is why many republicans and socialists left the Popular Front to join the Falange who, at that time, had much the same social ideology.

I spent a long time in a small hotel in San Sebastian. The manager of the hotel had fought with the Loyalists, and yet he made this remark: "if you place country above party, it is a good thing Franco won, otherwise Spain, today, would be completely in the hands of Russia."

I thought a great deal about a remark made by a friend. I was commenting on the orderly way in which a Spanish crowd waits for a bus or a street-car. In this country there is a mass motion, everybody trying to get ahead of everybody else. In Spain, the first person to wait stands next to the bus sign, the next one next to the first, and so on. When the bus comes there is an orderly motion of the whole line, each one staying where he belongs. If any one tries to get ahead of some one else, the conductor sends him back. And I said: "I thought that you, people, were individualists!" And my friend answered: "That's just it; we are individualists, and if our individualism were not curbed, it would lead to disaster." Perhaps that is true in politics as well as when getting on a bus.

The people respect Franco because he lives very simply, and because he has at heart the interest of the nation as a whole, and not of any special group. But there is a great deal of fear as to what will happen when he dies. Many will say: "If we got some one else as good as Franco, it would be all right, but who knows!" And so, you feel an undercurrent of fear and uncertainty.

Summing up my impressions of Spain, I shall merely say that Spain has staged a tremendous come-back, ostracized by the rest of the world; she deserves the respect and cooperation of all so-called civilized nations.

MARGOT ANDRADE

DePaul University

* * *

One of the great triumphs of linguistic science in the nineteenth century, which is the great century of linguistic research, was the gradual revelation of the manner in which many of the world's languages are related to one another. The work has by no means been completed. Much indeed is known about one vast linguistic family—the Indo-European; even more is known about one of the great subdivisions of the Indo-European family: the Romance languages. The Indo-European classification stands solidly established; there are other groups that require much clarification. Whether, in the absence of inscriptions and documents, this will be achieved, is yet in doubt. More important than knowing the names of some two thousand languages, a few of them philological mysteries, is a knowledge of the technique that has been used in classifying them.

—ISAAC GOLDBERG

* * *

Book Reviews

BIEBER, KONRAD F., *L'Allemagne vue par les écrivains de la résistance*. E. Droz, Genève et Lille, 1954, pp. 184.

This review is not an attempt to evaluate the author's facts, but to acquaint the prospective reader with the nature of the book's contents and the author's general conclusions. In the *Préface*, Albert Camus praises the author for his point of view in seeing in writers the attitude of fighting against an adversary yet being unable to hate him either as a man or as a nation. This is the general tone developed, and apparently proved by the author. In his *Avant-propos*, Mr. Bieber admits that his work is incomplete because of the vastness of the subject, but says that this is a first attempt to give a comprehensive and objective presentation of the state of mind of French intellectuals in regard to Germany. In his *Introduction*, he says that one of his objects is to show that on the whole French writers of 1939-45 abstained from cries of hatred against Germany as a nation or against Germans as individuals.

The book contains five main chapters and a conclusion. Particular emphasis is given to the works of Camus and Vercors, as they each are the subject of an individual chapter in addition to other references to them. Each chapter is well documented. Ideas when quoted, or verbatim statements, are designated as to page-number and edition in numerous footnotes, numbering on the average approximately three to a page of text. In the end, the *Bibliographie* lists entries in the hundreds, relating to the general theme under consideration—many items of which were consulted by the other. This is certainly inclusive enough to allow for any further study that might need to be made on the subject.

In the first chapter, the author traces the evolution in attitudes of writers towards their enemies in the period between the two World Wars. He makes an interesting and true observation that more hatred was fastened on the French collaborator than on the Nazi oppressor. The literature of the resistance is seen as a clarification of the views of Frenchmen on many present-day ideas. Also interesting is the fact that the clandestine struggle was carried on more successfully through poetry since censors often passed material from a poet whose ideas in prose would have brought death. Some prose writers like Mauriac attacked the enemy with full force, while Gide was accused of a lack of firmness against the invaders. Germans were recognized as humans whom Frenchmen fight, yet whom they refused to hate. Though the poets may have fought the Germans either with sword or with pen, they were all constantly trying mentally to rebuild Germany. A majority of these clandestine writers made a marked distinction between the German people and their military leaders. Resistance poets felt that they were making a contribution to literature. This is true, since after they had vented their anger during the war, they had, at the time of its close, attained a maturity in perspective by purgation of their hatred.

Camus' writings indicated that he felt that war had as its object the desire for justice rather than the opportunity for venting anger. Since man's intelligence is his greatest achievement, his desire for justice will triumph over hatred.

Vercors' resolve was to kill Germans, but not to hate them. In the words of Werner von Ebrennac, "I cannot without suffering offend a man even though he is my enemy."

Mr. Bieber concludes that out of the war came the idea that French writers wished to cooperate with Germany on physical and literary matters or aims. Patriots on both sides had realized the futility of hatred, and common resistance had brought together the bonds between poetry and life for all parties.

The author has done a remarkable job in proving his points. He has done painstaking research and reading in order to give illustrations of his main points. In addition, he has given an unbiased account, admitting the presence of counter voices and opinions when they were to be found. Although the last word has not, of course, been said, still it is not likely that a strong opinion counter to Mr. Bieber's can be successfully raised or sustained.

This book has real merit and will hold wide interest to students of twentieth-century literature, although it goes into only one phase of war-inspired writings. Many of the author's ideas, findings, and conclusions are illuminating and interesting. It is not always safe to make too many generalizations on a few instances, but those which Mr. Bieber cites are only a few chosen from among the many others which could easily have been found.

J. ROY PRINCE

Carson-Newman College

DUBOIS, MARGUERITE-MARIE; KEEN, DENIS J.; SHUEY, BARBARA, *Larousse's French-English, English-French Dictionary*. New York: Pocket Books, Inc., 1955, pp. xiv+2+256; viii+2+260. \$50.

This dictionary is not a reprint but has been specially prepared by Larousse in France. Professor Lester G. Crocker of Goucher College aided greatly in the editorial work.

Including, as it does, more than 25,000 words, it is sufficiently comprehensive to fulfill the requirements of a wide public. Preceding each of the two divisions, Français-Anglais and English-French, there are sections covering the essentials of grammar and the pronunciation of the respective "foreign" language, and tables of weights and measures. The grammar sections include complete lists of irregular verbs.

Printing of root-words in heavier type makes them readily distinguishable from compounds or colloquial expressions derived therefrom. Pronunciation is indicated in brackets by the use of phonetic symbols. The spelling follows American usage, with British differences given parenthetically. The book represents a new departure in

bilingual dictionaries, in that it recognizes the American language on a basis of equality with the English of England. This innovation should be appreciated by Americans who have been annoyed at times by the traditional adherence to British custom in works of this kind.

This is no mere handbook for beginners, but a work quite adequate to satisfy ordinary reference needs of serious students of either language.

Babson Institute
Wellesley, Massachusetts

LOUIS FOLEY

SONET, EDOUARD, AND SHORTLIFFE, GLEN,
Review of Standard French. Harcourt, Brace
and Company, New York, 1954, pp. ix+246.
Price, \$2.90.

Here is a new French review grammar that reveals unusually well the authors' awareness of the learners' needs, and unfolds gradually, systematically, and clearly the ways by which they have been met in the classroom. To a short review or to longer and more intensive work it is readily adaptable, for all students having completed at least one year of college French (or two of high school) will be pleased with the complete statements of the rules of standard French usage and will welcome the opportunities presented by the wealth and variety of exercises illustrative of all the rules. The authors, while recognizing from the start that "there is no easy formula for acquiring the language-habits of another people," have been able, in their rewording in more understandable terms, to bring to rules a personal touch of warmth that has the flavor of father-and-son camaraderie.

Believing "that the strength of any language review program is directly proportional to the calibre and variety of exercises," the authors have provided an almost unlimited abundance of exercises of varying difficulty. These are arranged systematically to serve students according to their individual needs as well as whole classes of varying levels of attainment. In the main section of the book there is on an average one page of exercises for every two pages of review of French usage; the second section, whose 34 parts deal with a like number of separate principles of French usage, is composed entirely of short sentences to translate into French; while the third section offers 21 interesting anecdotes whose translation into French will be intriguingly challenging to advanced students.

Each of the 21 lessons explains 4 or 5 rules (the most of which are related), offers some common exceptions, shows by model sentences how all these are used, lists about 15 idioms, then tests the student's grasp of the whole lesson through short sentences for oral fluency and longer ones for written assignment. About every third lesson contains an exercise in a general review and one in conversational style.

Elementary matters are provided for in the section entitled Syntax and General Reference; a short chapter on letter-writing will serve a useful purpose for many students; and the 37-page English-French vocabulary will be found complete, including all the idioms.

The authors merit congratulations for their thoroughness even in the smallest detail. No page is crowded, the

important words stand out in bold type, and the proof reading has been so well done that the reviewer could find need for changes only on pages 87, 137, 159 and 202, where punctuation marks and the word *voient* call for attention.

In this book is to be found a better-than-usual treatment of the often-neglected prepositions and conjunctions derived from prepositions, of the adverbs, present participles, gender of nouns and *c'est* and *il est*; the verbs and pronouns are reexamined and restrengthened; new life is pumped into the veins of the sequence in conditional sentences and the descriptive and narrative tenses; and many formulas for lightening the burden of memorization are prescribed.

To all teachers who believe with the authors that "to make a foreign language a living part of one's mental process demands practice until accuracy is a matter of habit," this book is heartily recommended, for they will find it quite rewarding.

C. D. MOREHEAD

Muskingum College

GIDE, ANDRÉ, *La Symphonie pastorale*. Edited
by Justin O'Brien and M. Shackleton. Boston:
D. C. Heath and Company, 1954, pp.
xxx+126. \$1.25.

The publication of a carefully prepared textbook edition of *La Symphonie pastorale* makes one of André Gide's most widely admired works easily accessible to intermediate students of French. The splendid introduction and the lengthy section of notes accompanying the text should, furthermore, assure an understanding and appreciative reading of this little masterpiece.

The introduction by Justin O'Brien furnishes a lucid, informative general view of André Gide and indicates the place that *La Symphonie pastorale* occupies in his development as a person and as a writer. Although Professor O'Brien never alludes to the most notorious turn that Gide took in his rebellion against the strict world into which he was born, everyone will, I am certain, agree that Professor O'Brien was wise to allow the individual instructor to decide the appropriateness of treating that aspect of the author. Professor O'Brien does, however, discuss in general terms Gide's conflicting yearnings for freedom and discipline, noting that Gide wrote *La Symphonie pastorale* partly to bring to light the dangers of the richer and freer life which he had proposed in some of his earlier works.

La Symphonie pastorale is a marvel of structure and style, and the notes begin with a rather lengthy, helpful word on the style of the work. Succeeding pages frequently explain specific examples of Gide's subtlety in choice and use of words, elucidating the text and enhancing the reader's pleasure. In his introduction, Professor O'Brien comments thoughtfully on the overall form of this *récit*, indicating the skill with which Gide handled the diary technique to show the evolution of the pastor.

All in all, the editors of *La Symphonie pastorale* have produced an admirable edition of this twentieth-century classic. In a few cases the notes and vocabulary appear to leave something to be desired, but among the flaws that I have noted, none seem worthy of mention except the following: *purpurin* (p. 17) might be better translated as

"crimson" or "red" rather than "purplish"; *repli* (p. 41) must surely mean "gap," "notch," or "pass" instead of "recess" or "bend"; *bonne grâce* (p. 55) is not in the vocabulary. Despite such minor blemishes, one can only find reasons for congratulating the editors and publishers for their contribution to the teaching of language and literature.

HUGH H. CHAPMAN, JR.

The Pennsylvania State University

Očerki istorii russskoj sovetsskoj literatury. Čast' pervaja. Moscow: Izdatel'stvo Akademii Nauk SSSR, 1954, pp. 375. 11 rubles.

For a long time the official sounders of Soviet cultural horns have smarted under a painful paradox: other than high-school textbooks, no history of Soviet literature, so incessantly advertised as "the most profound and advanced literature in the world," had been written since the late 'twenties. Yet it has taken enormous pressures from ideological headquarters to wrench this volume out of the Academy of Sciences. The reluctance of the academicians is not hard to understand. For one thing, the scholar who pokes ever so gingerly into the literary recesses of the 'twenties will inevitably discover the names of writers and critics who have not only disappeared from life, but have been officially erased from history. And how is one to write a history of erasures? Furthermore, it is clearly obligatory to maintain in such a history that Soviet literature, born in the glory of Revolution nearly forty years ago, has steadily gained in luster with each passing year, until today it radiates ineffable brilliance for the edification of the whole world. Whereas, as anyone with even a glimmering of literary sensitivity knows, the very reverse is true: a literature which showed considerable promise and vitality thirty years ago has been effectively crushed in the vise of totalitarian propaganda prescriptions and official bad taste.

But the heat was kept on, and this book was eventually produced; the first volume of a projected two-volume work, it goes as far as 1934. Despite its imposing Academy format, there is a certain guilty air about it. Its authors, who feel obliged to call it a "sketch" rather than a full-dress "history," apparently do not care to appear on the title page, but modestly postpone their entrance to page 3, where an "editorial collegium" of ten persons is listed in alphabetical order.

Any hopes one might have entertained that this book, as a manifestation of the post-Stalin era, would offer a more "liberal" interpretation of Soviet literary history, or even an affirmation of literary as against crudely political bases for judging literature—such hopes are soon destroyed. Zdanovism is still the order of the day. The literature of the past is evaluated almost exclusively in terms of its value as "soul engineering," stirring the masses on to greater victories in the building of Communism. A few quasi-aesthetic formulas, such as "typicality" or "genuine innovationism" [spurious innovationism is of course "formalism"] are applied mechanically, like litmus paper. The conception of historical development is extremely anachronistic: the literature of the 'twenties is made to toe the party line of the 'fifties. Such important figures as Pil'njak, Babel', Pantelejmon Romanov, Osip Mandel'stam, Aver-

bakh, and Lelevič still go entirely unmentioned, although, it is true, some formerly taboo names can now be mentioned if accompanied by a sufficiently vituperative denunciation (e.g., Oleša, Zamjatin, Čumandrin, Kljuev, Mikhail Bulgakov, Mejerkhof'd). Finally, the whole is written in that intolerably dreary, elephantine Soviet "collegium" manner, without the slightest flicker of originality, individuality, or life. Alas, the dawn of a new Soviet literary history is not yet.

HUGH McLEAN

Harvard University

MARRARO, HOWARD R. (ed.), *Italian Writers of Today. An Anthology of Short Stories, with Introduction, Notes, Exercises, and Vocabulary.* New York: S. F. Vanni, 1955, pp. xiv+286. \$2.75.

Professor Marraro deserves commendation for the choice of his material in this anthology. The "punch and poetry" criterion of Sean O'Faolain—which he followed—does not often lead the seasoned and sensitive critic astray. Another standard obviously followed by Professor Marraro is the measure of fame achieved by the writers represented in his book. Most of them, like Moravia, Vittorini, Pratolini, Buzzati and Papini, to mention only a few, are already familiar to the English reading world.

The anthology, representing 13 authors, with 17 selections, in general reflects the cold, callous, and cynical nature of Italian literature of post World War II. The only exceptions are those stories by Alvaro, Gianna Manzini, Pietravalle, Bacchelli and Cecchi in a lighter vein.

Among others, the anthology contains: two short stories by Alvaro, *Il rubino* and *La zingara* with the punch line ending reminiscent of Maupassant; a graphic documentary of the bombing of Rome in 1943 by Palazzeschi; a gruesome picture of and a commentary on our atomic age by Papini in *Visita a Ernest O. Lawrence*; the pathetic and skillfully executed *Andare verso il popolo* by Moravia illustrating the fact that indifference might be, if not more rewarding at least not as perilous as social consciousness, and another one by the same author, entitled *Malinverno*, about a murder perpetrated with the hardness of heart of a character from the gallery of Edgar Allan Poe; a charming story by Lina Pietravalle *Il Giardinetto* dealing with a child's first encounter with love and her almost immediate awareness of passing from childhood to adolescence; a story debunking the ghost myth in *Il Bosco invisibile* by Marotta; the story of a lonely and abandoned father's search for a runaway daughter in *Lo zio Agrippa passa in treno* by Vittorini.

The volume contains the necessary material to make it an effective classroom tool. For the instructor who can find to use them, there are English sentences for translation into Italian, questions in Italian for oral practice, and lists of idiomatic expressions to be used in original Italian sentences (pp. 187-215).

This textbook should bear fruitful results in the classroom, serving to impart the language and to furnish an excellent introduction to contemporary Italian literature. The short stories should encourage the student to continue his reading and the instructor to discuss the writer. Ample bibliographies of each author, in addition to a general

bibliography at the end of the book, should invite fresh reading and research.

A word of praise is due the publisher for the attractiveness of the volume and for adding one more textbook to the deplorably slender repertory available to those who teach Italian.

JULIUS A. MOLINARO

University of Toronto

WARDALE, W. L., *German Pronunciation*. Edinburgh: The University Press, 1955, pp. xi + 95. 6s.

The body of this little book intended for use in German classes is divided into two parts: descriptive phonology and pronunciation exercises. Preceding the first major division are a reference list of IPA symbols used, diagrams of the speech organs and the glottis, and a short glossary of phonetic terms. The author states that the pronunciation advocated is based on the standards recommended for the German stage and described in Sieb's *Deutsche Bühnenaussprache*.

The short chapters of Part One treat the sound-system of the literary language, the German vowels in detail, the German consonants in detail, the syllabification of German words, the syllabification of foreign words, the pronunciation of Latin in Germany, accent, and intonation. The term "sound-system" may possibly be misleading because the author does not use it as American scholars now would. The author uses it to include all the phonetic sound variants which he records for German as found in his reference list of IPA symbols. The discussion of German vowels has rather complicated cross-references to statements about the indication of vowel length in German orthography; these might better have been reserved for the pronunciation exercises. Although the presentation of German consonants has separate paragraphs for both the "ich-Laut" and the "ach-Laut," the pairs *t* and *d*, *p* and *b*, *k* and *g* are each treated in one paragraph. Some confusion results. In the chapters on syllabification of German and foreign words one cannot always tell where statements about pronunciation end and those about orthography begin. Under accent the author includes the placement of stress in words, phrases, and sentences. However, he symbolizes only three degrees of stress: primary, secondary, and weak. There is no consistent symbolization of emphatic or contrast stress which is also phonemic in the larger German units. The brief treatment of intonation is of necessity superficial. Three pitch levels are roughly symbolized, although it can be easily demonstrated that German has four phonemic pitch levels. The above criticisms, however, are not meant to disparage the author's useful presentation of German phonology with a wealth of examples in fifty-eight pages. The inclusion of numerous borrowed words is a welcome contribution, as also the brief description of the pronunciation of Latin in Germany, especially since it is not handled so systematically in the larger reference works.

The thirty-two pages of pronunciation exercises of Part Two cover all of the stressed vowel sounds treated in the descriptive section, selected consonants and consonant clusters, some Latin phrases and titles, and items containing the prefix *un-* for practice of stress placement. Again

the inclusion of a large number of foreign words is to be commended, as well as the indication of gender in the nouns. The last two paragraphs of the book which contain exercises pointing up the contrast between long and short vowels and unrounded and rounded vowels are especially valuable. The exercise on the contrast of vowel length could have been expanded with great profit, since the acquisition of habits which reflect the distinctive contrast of duration of the German vowel remains one of the thorniest problems of pronunciation for the student. He is not helped very much by an isolated list of words containing one of the short vowels of the German series followed by an isolated list containing one of the long vowels: e.g. (p. 78) "... Bruch Mumps Trupp ..." and (under a different exercise on the same page) "... Bruch Wucher Strudel. ..." The habit of neglecting vowel length could easily be fortified by seeing, and even hearing, an item *Bruch* in two separate exercises of this type. At any rate the student will hardly get the idea that the difference of meanings "fracture" and "marsh" is conveyed by distinctive vowel duration in German. A greater number of contrasting exercises might help.

A word index would have been very useful, but perhaps the cost was prohibitive. There are relatively few misprints. As a brief and practical introduction to German phonetics the book can be recommended not only to students but also to teachers of German.

B. J. KOEKKOEK

University of Buffalo

RÜDENBERG, WERNER, AND PEARL, KATE, *4000 German Idioms (Redensarten) and Colloquialisms with their English Equivalents*. London: Hirschfeld Brothers Limited, 1955, pp. 470. 21s.

Following closely upon the publication of the fifth fascicle of Spalding's *Historical Dictionary of German Figurative Usage*, the Rüdenberg-Pearl collation attests to the continuing vitality of British bilingual lexicography. Of its 4000 entries, about nine-tenths are idioms, defined as "more or less stereotyped rhetorical figures," and one-tenth compound nouns and adjectives "of idiomatic character" not usually found in bilingual dictionaries. In level, these entries range from literary to colloquial. "Vulgarisms" are omitted. Since Rüdenberg and Pearl believe, without the benefit of historical grammar, that idioms have, in most cases, risen from the ranks of colloquial usage before being accepted in literary style, they find it difficult to classify them precisely in accordance with the level of language employed. However, to guide the user of the book, they have identified—by means of a "(C)"—the entries which are "definitely reserved for conversational or colloquial style" (p. 5).

The entries are arranged in alphabetical order according to a simple principle. They are grouped either in terms of the first noun or proper name that occurs in them, or, failing this, according to the first adjective or participle used as an adjective, the first numeral, preposition or adverb, and, lastly, according to the first verb. To aid the eye, moreover, the key words are set in *Sperrdruck*.

The collators endeavor to provide in each instance an

English idiom or term with a meaning equivalent to that of the German phrase or word, although they admit to having found it impossible always to adhere to the same shade of meaning, or level of language, or to corresponding grammatical structures. A very few renditions fall below the intended standard. "He has no good points" and "It has quite stunned me" are characteristic of these. "He doesn't have a decent bone in his body" (*Es ist keine gute Ader an ihm*) suggests itself more readily for the former, and "It takes my breath away" (*Es verschlägt mir den Atem*) surely corresponds more concisely to the latter. Some fine nuances, frequently overlooked by other lexicographers, also escape Rüdenberg and Pearl. They offer one and the same meaning ("That's the limit") for *Da hört sich alles auf* and *Das ist die Höhe*. By the same token they record two meanings ("That takes the cake" and "That's the last straw") for *Das schlägt dem Faß den Boden aus*. The imagery points to "Now I have heard everything" for *Da hört sich alles auf*; "That's the limit" for *Das ist die Höhe*; and "That beats everything" for *Das schlägt dem Faß den Boden aus*.

On the whole, the compilers have grappled manfully and gracefully with the problem of *traduttore, traditore*. Among their more felicitous parallels are: "Für ein Butterbrot kaufen"—"To buy for a song"; "Jemandem die Hände unter die Füße breiten"—"To wait on someone hand and foot"; and "Hans Dampf in allen Gassen"—"Jack of all trades." Also nicely rendered are at least two proverbs, although it was not Rüdenberg and Pearl's intention to include proverbs in their collection (p. 6), viz. "Kleinvieh macht viel Mist"—"Many a litter makes a mickle" and "Wenn man ihm einen kleinen Finger reicht, will er die ganze Hand"—"Give him an inch and he'll take an ell."

Despite one lone American source (p. 9), Rüdenberg and Pearl have kept the number of Criticisms to a minimum and have in fact produced, as L. A. Willoughby put it in the Foreword to the dictionary, a volume of practical value to students and the general public at home and abroad.

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UGARTE, FRANCISCO, *Beginning Spanish*. New York: The Odyssey Press, 1955, pp. x+233. \$2.40.

Beginning Spanish is a "minimum" grammar by the author of the admirable *España y su civilización*. The book consists of twenty lessons, four *Ejercicios de Repaso*, and the usual verb appendix and complete end vocabularies. As the author states, it "is designed to promote the attainment of the three major objectives of foreign language study: fluency in speaking, correctness in writing, and understanding in reading." If used in college, it is intended to be completed in one semester; more time would be required for use at the secondary level.

The organization of each lesson is the usual one: a list of vocabulary and idioms, a reading passage, presentation of grammar, and a series of exercises for oral and written practice. One of the review exercises contains a useful study of cognates. Four excellent maps of the Spanish-speaking world are included at the beginning of the text.

The chief merits of this book are the concise, lucid manner in which the grammar is presented and the quality of

the reading material, which most students will find lively and interesting and which should lend itself well to oral practice. Quite a number of the selections have to do with various aspects of Spanish life. On the other hand, some teachers will feel that the author would have done better to spread his material over twenty-five lessons instead of twenty or to shorten considerably the content of each lesson. The vocabularies are excessively long, many of them running to fifty or more words and idioms a lesson as required by the lengthy reading passages. The exercises are far more abundant than is practical and to select would often require a careful combing of the vocabulary and cutting of the reading material on which the sentences are based. It is evident that in order to provide so much exercise material the author has spread his material thin. The result is that many of the sentences have a forced, stilted, manufactured sound. An exercise of ten meaningful and natural-sounding sentences is much to be preferred to one of twenty-five with such examples as "In Argentina the men are proud and there are almost too many cows and horses." The teacher who is willing and able to do a considerable amount of pruning will find the book otherwise quite acceptable.

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GINSBERG, RUTH R. AND NASSI, ROBERT J., *Speaking Spanish*. Boston: Allyn and Bacon, Incorporated, 1955, pp. ix+276. \$2.88.

Now that the study of foreign languages in the elementary grades is outgrowing its swaddling clothes, there arises the urgent necessity for textbooks and guides adequate to encourage the language abilities and needs of the elementary age group. *Speaking Spanish*, geared to that necessity, nevertheless draws a sharp line between language study and language appreciation or language introduction.

With typical American coldness and disregard for the warmth and beauty of the Spanish language, the authors have gathered together the same stock expressions and methods which have dominated our foreign language textbooks for as long as most of us care to remember. With a conspicuous lack of prepositions and conjunctions the question-answer technique (employed throughout) contributes to the parrot-like speech so characteristic among American language students.

There is little grammar here and the present tense only, which reduces drudgery at the expense of reducing understanding and mastery of the structure of Spanish. This negative method of holding student interest is not fortified much by the positive interest in the language and its people, which could have been accomplished with selected cultural materials. The customs of the people are presented in short, graphic paragraphs infrequently throughout the text. They appear cold and meaningless since they are not used in the oral or written work in sufficient quantities. The songs, poems and illustrations are well chosen and, of course, would serve the desired purpose even were they isolated from the textual material.

The feeling and emotion of the Spanish language is almost completely lacking. A waiter upon being notified that he had served coffee in a dirty cup replies, "*Perdone Vd.*,

señorita. Aquí tiene Vd. una taza limpia." Where are the exclamations, such as *¡Ay de mí!*, and the protestations of regret?

¿Qué tal? here is merely, "How are you? (*¿Cómo está usted?*)" rather than "How? Hello! How is everything?" (after Dr. E. B. Williams).

The pronunciation guide in the appendix is poorly assembled. It would be difficult for an uninitiated student to discover that a "d" pronounced softly was really a cross between "d" and "t," or to discover the difference between "b" in boy and "b" with the lips barely touching one another.

Since the pronunciation guide gives preference to the Latin American style ("y" as in "yes" rather than as in "million" for "ll," "c" as in "cent" and "s" as in "say" rather than "th" as in "think") and since the characters and situations are Latin American, one would expect the

Latin American wordage to be given preference. "Potato" is Spanish *patata*, however, rather than Latin American *papa*; and the same holds true in other cases where the common Latin American usage could have been used to advantage. It seems also that *El emparedado* or *La tortita* (Mexican) would have been preferable to *El sandwich*.

Undoubtedly the repetition of words and serviceable phrases over a long period of time would leave with the average student *some* idea of spoken Spanish. But without the feeling of the language, without the structure of the language or the beauty of its rhythm, without an understanding of the customs and way of life of its people, what sort of background has one?

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Language and thought are inextricably dependent one upon the other. There is, to be sure, much language without great thought, but thought is possible but through the medium of the WORD. There is no fancy that does not record itself either in exclamation or in word-images in the recesses of the mind. "In the beginning was the WORD" is a dictum the tremendous psychic implications of which are not at all suspected by the many and vaguely sensed but by the few. Among those few are practically all the world's great philosophers, and so far is philosophy still removed from the solution of the riddle that Wilbur M. Urban is induced to declare language to be "the last and deepest problem of the philosophical mind." The study of the WORD, when intelligently pursued, is of all human studies the one through which all the others are integrated.

—EDWARD F. HAUCH

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Languages have distinct and diverse characters: they are as different as faces. German looks different, sounds different, feels different from French. The very exercises in French, in German, in Italian, and in Spanish vary in character. Some seem straightforward, direct, clear; others have a sympathetic homeliness; still others have sounds that reflect clear skies. Latin can suggest even to a small boy the order and weight of the legions. Only by being aware of the quality of another tongue can we have even an idea about the character of our own.

—H. R. HUSE

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